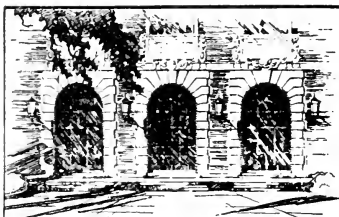


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THE
LOYALIST'S DAUGHTER

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OR

TALE OF THE REVOLUTION

BY

A ROYALIST.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:
ADAMS & FRANCIS, 59, FLEET STREET, E.C.
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DAUGHTER are reserved for the Author.*

THE LOYALIST'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The world's false lights—its mild emotion,
Shall move her mind no more,
The star which wakes her soul's devotion
Illumes th' eternal shore.

* * * * *

Vain dreams of youth are past and perish'd,
While youth is still in bloom ;
Friends, hopes, and scenes once loved and cherish'd,
Are sunk in memory's tomb.—*W.*

Or those eventful days of fearful adventures recorded in our last chapter, little remains to be told. A direct walk of a mile brought Strickland and his new acquaintance, bearing Hough between them, back to the bereaved and sorrowful smuggler's hut.

The Oxford man's thanks to the good sister, and his apologies for the alarm and trouble which he had caused her ; and his indescribable

admiration of her presence of mind, were, indeed, rather looked than spoken ; for the tender and conflicting emotions of feeling and prostration of body denied him more power of utterance than the indistinct murmurings of gratitude, apparently mingled with an expression of affection which Strickland could not understand ; nor could he divine the sister's manner of receiving those indications of such tender regard.

As the poor fellow, when endeavouring to lighten his companions of the burden which his weakness imposed on them, took her hand with a grateful, but respectful courtesy, and would have pressed it to his lips, she gently forbade the endearment, presenting to him the crucifix which was suspended at her girdle. Her whole manner of receiving his expressions of gratitude, was that of a young woman consecrated to God, and on her mission of heavenly love. She seemed no way displeased with the approaches which he would make to her sympathy and her heart. She admitted no word or look of recognition ; and yet, there was something in that shriek of hers that seemed to tell of other feelings ; there was a mysterious meaning in that irresistible influence which impelled Hough to that terrific leap ; there was more than met the eye in the

united sensations which mutually affected the two young people.

Strickland, comparing all that he witnessed with the letter he had found on the beach of Galloway, in connection with some rattling remarks of Clare at the old church in Kent, could not but suspect the possibility of a former acquaintance between the rescued and the rescuer. The terrible incidents which had all crowded upon each other in the course of a few hours, rushed tumultuously through the soldier's mind, as the gurgling waters gushed and tumbled through the fathomless and dark abyss from whose yawning jaws his friend had been saved. But in the mental confusion the thought flashed through his mind, that this was not the first meeting of him whom she had delivered from destruction and the beautiful sister.

On reaching the hut nothing could exceed the old inmate's welcome of the party. His own unutterable affliction and self-condemnation, aroused his sympathies for others' woe. With the youthful party he felt not only a fellowship of sorrow, but a communion of religious sentiment, strengthened by the common bond of loyalty which seemed to involve all in the same fate. A couch of heather was instantly pre-

pared, and such dry clothing as the house afforded, spread over it. A reviving cordial was administered by the fair hand of the sister to her suffering brother. Everything which charity could design, or the skill of so young a woman effect, were brought to the comfort and restoration of her patient : all passed before his closing eyes as the exciting vision of a dream. He heard the sister's voice ; he thought he saw her placid smile.

There was only one thing about him which she seemed to notice : it was the token which was dropped to him from Lady Place window ; still treasured in the same cambric in which he first received it, was the little *Agnus Dei* of exquisite workmanship and costly material, enveloped in a written prayer for his conversion to the Catholic faith, to be offered by himself. She pressed it fervently to her lips and mentally prayed.

"I have faithfully kept the engagement you exacted from me. Have you kept your promise as inviolably ?" she softly whispered in his ear.

"In my letter from Oxford, I told you all, my dearest — I mean my holy sister," said Hough, correcting himself, and faintly sobbed, overcome by his feelings. These whispered

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words of mutual and tender recollections brought this accidental meeting and parting abruptly to an end.

The clergyman whom the bereaved smuggler had mentioned, darkened the door, and told him he would receive his confession to-morrow at a neighbouring "station;" then, with the sister, instantly vanished from the sight of the young men.

To Hough, to feel that his little known, but too fondly loved Lily, whose image had filled his mind ever since he had left her so reluctantly at Lady Place, and who had in her own real person for a moment met his eye during the royal procession in London, was still safe and apparently happy, gave him a sense of pleasure, too near, alas! akin to pain.

Their claims upon each other were now, by the wonderful dispensation of Providence, reciprocal; their obligations mutual. To each, the other owed a life. Her title to refuse his addresses was established by the service she had so nobly rendered him. But her intention expressed in her letter, which he had doubted, was now by her garb, her manner, her evident adoption of some holy sisterhood of nuns, confirmed, and came upon him as a blow, for which nothing

that had ever passed between them could have prepared him. In feeling for the *Agnus Dei*, which he had for an instant missed, he discovered, suspended by the same chain, an ivory cross, to which was attached a paper on which was written in pencil mark, "*O crux ! ave spes unica !*" and under these words, "Accept this cross. I give it you as a token of our second providential meeting : may it guard and defend you in the battle-field should you meet the king's enemy ; may it shield you abroad and accompany you to your Protestant home, and remind you of your Lord and my Lord, your country and my country. May He preserve us both for better times is the prayer of your grateful friend, Martha."

Hough was unconscious of everything but the unaccountable apparition, assistance, and disappearance of her from whom he was destined to be severed. His heart throbbed too violently for his strength, as the flickering light of the rush candle, stuck against the rock wall, faintly revealed the words before him, and the little cross. The signature was not that of his first, fair, and only loved one. He must after all, he thought to himself, be under a delusion, or his imagination, now hovering on

delirium, must altogether have deceived him. He went over and over the last words. They had reference to the past and the future; she could not be indifferent to his happiness.

It was not till his worn out and agitated friend had sunk into a sweet sleep, as tranquil and almost as still as death, that Strickland, having changed his briny clothes for those of the drowned sailor, which the old man supplied with a melancholy pride, attempted to soothe the sorrows of his humble host.

“Yes,” at length the aged mourner cried, “I can go to him, though he cannot come to me: God rest his sowl; but he will not pray for me, for I kilt him: I was the father of the gorsoon that was the death of him. O murther! O murther!”

It was only comfort in his own native language from the lips of the priest in the sacrament of penance, he declared, that could give him any ease or relief of mind.

It was on the next day, after the Sister of Charity had disappeared, as the old man sat rocking himself and smiting his breast in the restless disquietude of his soul, that he directed his eye to the unwonted event of a passenger hastening down the steep and broken path which

conducted from the south slopes to the hut, at the entrance of which the English guest and the Irish host were warming themselves in the sun.

“ ’Tis the good sister,” cried the host.

The stranger on a nearer approach appeared to be a nun ; in a few minutes she stood before them, and turning to Strickland, made him a most studied curtsy. She wore the religious habit, and her face was partially concealed beneath her hood, so that the young gentleman could not distinctly discern her features, but he felt assured that he had never seen her before. She was in every respect but her robe as different from the beautiful sister of yesterday as the exterior of her dress was from the gaudy inside things it could scarcely keep out of sight.

“ May it please you, fair sir,” said the damsel, with one of her most finished smiles, “ I have ridden all the way from Coleraine on a sorry little jade of a mountain pony, with a great big hamper of good things, apparel and medicine, from my young mistress, for your use. Oh! the heat, the lily dew-drops, how they did come over me ! I thought I should have fainted, had it not been that a fowler with his gun in his hand fell in with me on the road, which he said

was much worse before it was made. He would keep me company, and walked by my side, talking such brogue and lingo as I never did hear. The people called him a gay boy, but he was quite a man, well growed, and as comely as Hubert Hunter. But, sir, every body and everything are *so* changed since our last strange meeting. There is my young Missis, who I always thought too much of a lady to have demeaned and uglified herself into a vulgar person, and mingled herself up as she has done with a posse of sisters who go about ungentlelyfied, just as I am when disfigured in this nasty dress. Though a Catholic, I'll never be a nun."

"My good young woman," said Strickland, with ill-suppressed impatience, "you are under some mistake."

"No, no; I know my duty, sir, and my lady's orders. The only wonder is that you could have recovered so miraculously; but the low canaille about these savage parts say their saints work wonderful cures, and even bring the dead to life. Miss Pen——, the holy sister, told me, as the Hantrim Hirish say, that she left you "sick, sore, and sorry," and in a bad way; in short, in just such another plight (though it isn't the likes

o' me that ought to say so to her betters), as you, young gentleman, brought her to the front door of Lady Place, dripping like a water-lily. My gracious goodness! how I did shake all over, and fell into hysticks! you know. It threw me all on an heap."

"What can the girl mean," asked the astonished Strickland, "I never saw you before in all my life, and know not to what accident I am indebted for your interesting conversation."

"Oh fie! sir," she retorted, "that is *too* bad; how *can* you say so?"

As if to convince him of his error, she threw back her hood with the air of one whose face was too charming for such an envelope; then smirked, and simpered, and played with her girdle, to which there was attached no crucifix.

She effectively fastened the old smuggler's notice, by her jaunty attitude. He smiled a grim smile, which would have withered one of his countrywomen into silence. But Miss Di, true to her vocation, was notwithstanding that blasting smile, opening upon the young officer a volley, when he disabled the battery, by putting her under the conduct of the old man, who soon handed her into the presence of the gentleman for whom her freight,

not her eloquence, was intended, but not before she gave vent to her feeling of mortification at the slight impression she must have made on one whom she believed to be the lover of her young mistress.

“La, sir!” she cried in her genteelest tones, “how bad your memory his grown! I knew ’twasn’t for the sake of the maid, so much as to win your way through her to the mistress, that you put into my hand the gold pieces, like a gentleman as you *were*.”

Then, as if by the energy of her elocution, her coarse outward robe opening, displayed a variety of dazzling ornaments, which seemed only too glad to peep out in their gaud and glitter, which she said, it was a pity to conceal.

“These are the trinkets,” said she, with a sort of lady’s-maid’s assurance, which only evoked from Strickland a look of angry surprise.

In that look she fancied she read reproach, and turning round indignantly on her heel, exclaimed with great pathos, “How, sir, could I find the heart to refuse anything from such a pretty young cavalier as you then were!”

The correct officer could stand it no longer. To make a long story short, the first sight of

Hough, ill and altered as he was, convinced Miss Di of her mistake. A mutual recognition settled everything.

Hough now perceived that the scenes through which he had passed were more than the mere visions of a dream. To prevent the little scene which she was ready to re-enact, Strickland and the old man hurried her away. She had only time to declare that the hole in which the dear young gentleman was thrust was not fit for a pig, when Larry O'Moore, a son of the old smuggler, weary of waiting, had come down to the hut with the hamper on his shoulder. The old man's eyes were not so dim with age or tears, that he could not form a shrewd guess at the contents, and perhaps enjoyed some such feeling as gladdened the sad heart of the ancient patriarch, when he saw the sight of the welcome provisions from Egypt. Nor were the poor man's expectations of his own beneficial interest in the basket disappointed. The old man's vacant glance of insanity, which had for days assumed a melancholy cast, glimmered into a look of grateful satisfaction. The extraordinary visitors who stooped for shelter beneath his roof; the knowledge of their suffering; the sympathy which the kind nun felt for him, and the welcome

presents she had included for him made him feel as if he had "entertained angels unawares." The old man had carefully observed the rites of old Irish hospitality, and to the best of his power accommodated both guests with the best his poor hut afforded. But the good things sent by the holy sister enabled him to entertain them more sumptuously. The party sat down, including Larry, all together as one family and enjoyed their repast. They formed but one family in faith and loyalty. In such circumstances and at such moments, the difference between the man of low degree and the most exalted of our race is but little.

Before Strickland left the table, he presented the old smuggler with a handful of gold pieces, charging him to take care of the young gentleman till he could be removed. To Larry he also gave a remembrance, who in return presented his honour with a pair of horse-pistols and a sword.

"God reward your honour. May Saint Patrick and all the saints be with you," chimed in both the father and son.

Before quitting for ever the tremendous monuments of Nature's wonders, Strickland desired to explore the lofty heights and dark ravines with which the immediate neighbourhood of the

hut was diversified. An air of gloomy greatness overshadowed his mind with melancholy. Here and there, however, the awful severity of the horrid crags was softened by the yellow bloom of the furze, or the warm tints of various heaths. He wandered amid rugged steepes, broken acclivities, and rocky caverns, the abodes of birds of prey. Once or twice he heard or thought he heard the screams of the eagle or the vulture warning him not to invade his realms. The sun, however, which was now declining to the sea, reminded him to return to his suffering comrade, and of the immediate departure which must follow.

Hough, before he could say farewell, confided to him the whole tale of his first meeting with the lady who had assumed the garb of a Sister of Charity. The soldier took both his hands in his, and said, "Farewell my boy, we shall meet again," and in an instant was out of sight of the hut.

The day was already drawing towards evening; the most glowing tints of colouring harmonized with forms the wildest and most varied; but the guardsman was so absorbed in his own reflections, his anxiety for Hough, and sorrow for the fate of the revered friend whom he had lost,

that he had no eye for scenery : the dear near object assumed a greater magnitude in his view than the momentous events in the distance before and behind him, just as the half tame sparrow at his feet seemed greater to his eye than the eagle on the far off lofty cliff.

A soothing calm was stealing over him, however, as he listened to the sweeping of the waves, chanting their vespers in measured melody, transporting his whole being to a brighter and a better shore beyond the waves of this troublesome world.

Storm and sea had now obeyed their Maker's word, and there was a great calm. Strickland had not advanced far on his awful and solitary way, when he sat down in silence to contemplate the sublime panorama. Though at first only occupied by the enchanting scene that stretched away in endless view before him, yet his thoughts, evidently under the influence of that strange and tranquil composure, travelled far above and beyond it. In a transport of devotion and delight he gazed far westward along the burnished golden road of light, as that which seemed to lead to some blessed land.

He gazed, and as he gazed he sang the words in which his thoughts found vent :

“ Faith of old Erin living still,
In spite of Anglo-Irish lords,
Let Erin's heart beat high with joy ;
Rise Ulster with your native swords.
For the faith of old,
To Saxon sold
For Irish gold.

“ Sweet Isle of Saints ! I love thee well,
Hold fast thy faith, so pure, so bright,
Let Erin's faith still in thee dwell,
And Erin's saints will for thee fight.
For the faith of old,
&c., &c.

“ Heights of Antrim, fare thee well,
Long may Saint Patrick on thee smile,
And all thy wrongs and sorrows tell
To the saints above who guard his Isle.
For the faith of old,”
&c., &c.

This impromptu song, so applicable to the north of Ireland and its history for centuries, scarcely interrupted the universal harmony of nature. More than once the enthusiastic singer started at the echoes, feeble as they were, of his own words, when compared to the music of the loud resounding wave : especially did one echo reiterate the chorus. The echo seemed but as the slight murmur of a voice from the bosom of the mountains ; it had in it some-

thing of the voice of his lost friend. It was the most improbable accident, that had brought to him his long lost, but still loved friend, Father Mansuete, the King's late confessor, a good mild man, to guide and bless him, when a stranger in a strange land, amid the sequestered solitudes of Galloway. But the angry deep had swallowed the good father out of his sight. He had himself witnessed a careful search for the body, but in vain. The echo awoke sad thoughts of him. He listened and looked around. As he raised his eyes in the direction of the lofty cliff of Dunluce, they rested on a solitary figure in the habit of a Franciscan friar, standing on a rock which overhung the sunny spot where Strickland was sitting. His desolate attitude of silent supplication, was expressive of resigned sorrow. The surprised beholder would have set the apparition down to the wild influence of an over strained, or even crazy imagination, agitated by the shocking recent events which afflicted him; or that for some wise reason the ghost of the drowned priest might have been commissioned to revisit this world; for it seemed impossible it could be the real clergyman, in his own person of flesh and blood that met his gaze. Like all heroes

of Romance, therefore, he believed that his senses were at fault—that his eyes had deceived him.

“May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace,” he ejaculated. The last word was scarcely ended, when the suppliant distinctly heard the rich, clear, full, Roman Amen, in the well-known accents and voice of Father Mansuete.

Had anything been wanting to confirm the wanderer's belief that the priest was still alive, it was supplied in the recital of words in such accents as none but a native of France could pronounce. He raised his eyes again, and there in the gloaming stood the priest, who to one of his own Latin prayers had breathed his loud Amen, and was adding—

“Gardez-nous du péril, Étoile radieuse,
Daignez nous diriger sur la mer orageuse,
Marie, Étoile de la mer.”

“My son,” cried the holy man, descending to Strickland, “what Providence has brought us together in such a terrible place !”

“The same kind Providence which brought you to my guidance and assistance in Scotland,” was the officer's reply.

Their respective stories were mutually told in few words. Father Mansuete had been carried

round a sharp turn of the indented coast, and was picked up, just as he was about to sink for the third time, by a boat in the service of Alexander Macdonnel, Earl of Antrim, which plied between the Western Isles and Dunluce. The earl had himself, with his regiment, at the first outbreak of the war in the north of Ireland, repaired to Londonderry; but finding the gates closed against him, and not feeling desirous of commencing a civil war without further orders from King James, had retired to Coleraine, and subsequently had joined the royal army. Still, a priest in distress was ever a welcome guest in the Castle of Dunluce, and there Father Mansuete was hospitably entertained by such inmates as the earl left behind him.

“The time,” said the Reverend Father, “is wearing away, and souls are passing every minute into Eternity, unblest by the consolations of religion, and even destitute of the last sacraments. As soon, therefore, as I am able, I am most anxious to hasten to the seat of war, escaping the notice of the Scotch puritans, who, with the English settlers, desire to slay and to spare not the “Amalekites and the priests of Dagon,” as they call us. I am waiting for Father O’Neal, according to his directions.”

With deep attention he turned his pale face to the young officer, and listened to his story of Hough's disaster, and the effectual assistance and energetic exertions of the young sister of Mercy. He listened in silence, and reverted to his benefactor, the parish priest. Father O'Neal was every inch Irish. His mission was among his own people. Of the same humble rank as his parishioners, he rejoiced in their joy, which he often increased ; he sorrowed in their sorrows, which he lightened ; he knew each of his flock by name ; he was familiar with their virtues and their failings : to all he was a father and a friend. His language, his feelings, his country were theirs. Their destiny identical with his own. Their temporal interests he promoted ; their eternal welfare was his object. With his people he sympathised as one of themselves ; as an ambassador of the Almighty, clothed with His authority, he ruled them with power. A salt herring and potatoes, or butter-milk and an oatcake, were often his only fare ; while his hospitality was munificent, and his charity, the sacrifice of himself. Such was the man who loved and saved, cherished, guarded, and directed his foreign brother in the dark hour of his distress. His manner was earnest, but

simple, and his energy unabated by hardship. He soon made his appearance, and at once, after his first greetings of the young Saxon Catholic, whom he looked upon as a miracle of Grace, supplied such necessary information of the way as the rugged and dangerous journey required. Like most Irishmen, whether lay or clerical, he was liberal of his knowledge, especially when he thought it would contribute to the happiness of those to whom it was imparted. He evinced real and practical acquaintance with the local history of the neighbourhood. With reference to the Sisters of Mercy,—

“Even women,” remarked the Father at the close of his recital, “have before now astonished the world by their Christian courage; but in no country does it appear that holy women have been more distinguished for their devotion and faith than in Ireland. Even as early as the fifth century societies of pious women were introduced by St. Bridget; and so general was the enthusiasm which her example exerted, that the religious order which she instituted spread its branches through every part of the island. The pure sanctity of this virgin’s life still sheds a sacred influence over the whole land.”

But The grievances of Ireland, formerly as well

as in our own day—England's sinning against her—was the complaint of her priests and of her children.

Passing over the earlier aggression of England upon her liberty and nationality, "only think for an instant on the penal code, the bitter fruit of the Reformation," cried the rural priest, "which from year to year has been growing a harvest of matured venom, which poisons men's minds, and divides those of the same household. The gifted children of our country were not even allowed to study in foreign universities; all the Catholics of noble birth were excluded from office and honours, the poor, burdened with fines, and treated as slaves. We paid a tax for keeping a conscience; and though the sum levied for non-attendance on the Established Church was only twelve pence, the fees exacted by the officers for collecting the fine, often exceeded ten shillings.

"While forbidden to use our own country's laws, we were as aliens, shut out from the laws of our masters."

"True," answered the Franciscan, "nothing can be more anomalous than the position of Ireland. But she is blest by her noble perseverance in the Faith."

Strickland, who always stood up for the Stuarts, declared that James I., as well as James II., legislated in favour of Ireland.

“Yes ; but remember young gentleman,” said the Irishman, “that our first sovereign of the Scotch dynasty, at the close of his reign issued a proclamation, commanding the whole of the Catholic clergy, both lay and regular, to leave the kingdom.”

The travellers, who were probably as indifferent to the thrice told tale of Erin's woes, and this protracted discourse, as the reader, reminded their well-intentioned guide that they must avail themselves of the moon, and hasten on to Coleraine. For some miles, as they travelled in the desired direction, not a cabin was in sight ; not a living thing was to be seen under the light of the full moon, when a quick irregular tramp of men's feet upon the heath, behind a rock, alarmed the party. In turning round, Strickland saw two men, armed with blunderbusses, evidently advancing from their ambush upon them, to oppose their further progress.

“Stand and deliver !” cried the foremost.

Scarcely was the order given, when one of Strickland's pistols was levelled at the highwayman's head. But before he could pull the

trigger, the Irish priest's hand was on the officer's shoulder.

"Hold ! for heaven's sake, hold ! and you, omathane of the world, down with that ugly tool of yours. Sure the moon is bright enough to show you what we are. Two priests and as fine a Catholic loyal officer as you'd meet in a day's walk."

"Oh, father ! forgive me ; sure 'twas the swaddling spalpeens I was after taking you for ; the Dutch devils, or Calvinists, who do be skulking about for information against honest boys," said the robber ; "and by the same token I gave two of the sneaking snivellers last night a few shots in the legs, and a slice of my mind. 'Mind your own business,' says I. 'What is that ?' says they. 'To keep your own school,' says I, 'and teach your psalm-singing swaddlers the science of the seven deadly sins. The devil a more nor less,' says I. But I am as glad as a one pound note to hear your voice, Father John," said he, drawing closer and uncovered towards the native priest with profound reverence. "Sure 'twas yourself that saved these dacent Saxons. May I never sin ; but yez were all as dead then as red herrings, had your Riverence not spoken. The saints be

praised its no worse. Oh, Mother of Heaven ! sorra a day's peace I'd ever have seen agin. 'Tis Saint Patrick that sint ye, to save the gintlemen's lives, and my own sowl. Faix, 'tis the truth I'm telling ye, upon my conscience it is."

"Arrah ! lave off cursing there, with your quare ways ; and bad manners to you, Billy," remonstrated Father John.

"Sure," rejoined the robber, "if 'twasn't for the likes of me, many's the poor family would be after starving these times, while the shabby Saxon nagars turn the dacent neighbours out of doors, or take them before the justice of the pace. I had made up my mind to have a lob from these grand-looking quality, for the poor crathurs. There's ould Roger O'Moore, too, who lost his smack in the king's sarvice, and sorra a fraction he has to bless himself with. I could have settled the blue-jacket here when he cocked his bull-dog at me ; but something came over me that masthered me intirely."

"You seem quite satisfied with the sort of life you lead," said the French priest.

"I would not change it for the life of any gentleman in the land, barrin Tyrconnel," replied Bill the Blunderbuss ; for that was the name in

which he rejoiced. He was perhaps as great a man in his day as Freney or Dick Turpin in later times.

Had either of these three men been commanders of an invading army which drove the innocent possessors from their happy homes, or cut down the harmless rustic amid his own sweet fields, or robbed at the point of the sword the honest native merchant of his rights, they might have figured as brilliantly in history, and been as much admired as Marlborough, Napoleon, or Wellington. Over this bandit hero, raised from the dregs of the people, the parish priest had most supreme power — nay, most irresistible influence, more than all the forces of the Prince of Orange, were he in their power.

“Let the English landlord be rooted out. Let the black hearted heretic no longer pollute our beautiful land, the Isle of the Saints, and the devil a finer counthry there’d be under heaven,” cried he, and burst out into a wild chant—

“O ! Erin mavourneen, the green
We’ll drive the proud Saxon away,
’Tis yourself that’s the beautiful queen,
Oh ! shake off the heretic’s sway.”

The rest of the song, whatever it was,

Father John cut short by an appeal to the enthusiastic singer.

“But who is to protect these gentlemen and guide them to Coleraine? you must do something to recover their good opinion of us. And sure 'tisn't a bad notion of Ireland you'd be letting them take away with them.”

“Troth 'tis myself that's obedient to the world's end, to sarve the church or the priest.”

“Well then, as you value your salvation,” said the Father, “see them safe to Martin Sullivan's, on this side Coleraine.”

“By the same token,” says the champion, “I know the house well; for after my little affair with the swaddlers, an English fellow who was with them, seeing the Proddies were getting the worst of it, came over to us, declaring he was going to Londonderry. He showed me a note from an Oxford gentleman, whom he declared had hired him on a boating excursion, but who had been drowned crossing to Ireland. He showed me a note from the waiting-woman of a Catholic lady. He seemed to wear two faces under a hood; but I gave him the benefit of the doubt, though the devil a pater or a credo he could say.”

“We shall be grateful,” said Strickland, with-

out heeding what the robber had been saying, "for such a brave escort; for we have no claim on one who has such terrible prejudices against the Saxon."

"You may depend on him," said Father O'Neal.

"So we will then," cried the Franciscan.

"I know," O'Neal said, "that your duties as well as your wishes call one of you to endanger life; and the other to prepare the living for death; whatever be the fortunes which may betide you in battle, sir," he continued, looking Strickland in the face, "and whatever be your success Rev. Father, in fortifying poor souls for their last journey; you will ever find in the poor Ulster priest, a firm and faithful friend. Dominus vobiscum."

"Et cum spiritu tuo," answered the Englishman.

The Irish brigantine, then putting his fingers to his lips after the manner of his country, sent forth a long, shrill, thrilling whistle, which re-echoed through every rocky dell — a whistle which those who have heard it can never forget. It was louder and higher than the wildest scream of a bird of prey.

It had scarcely died on the night air, when

two men appeared, but at a respectful distance from their chief. He seemed now prepared for the worst, but hoping for the best. He was equal to any emergency, and ever prompt to decide. His patriotic bursts of intellect or passion, and really romantic legends of Irish Saints and Irish heroes, beguiled the weary way. There were, indeed, some episodes in his adventures, which amused and astonished his hearers. They could not but express their regret that such a noble nature should have been perverted to the life of a brigantine.

"Yours, my friend," said the Franciscan, with a solemn shrug of his shoulders, "is a terrible and perilous course. Could you not turn your genius to some safer mode of aiding your neighbour in distress, and thus secure yourself from the severity of the offended law?"

"Glory be to God! God help the innocent! Peace, Father, is your vocation. To spoil the rich oppressor, to execute the laws which I myself decree, is my profession."

"Yes;" rejoined the monk, "but we are both men and both of us accountable to the Great Giver for the gift bestowed upon each of us."

“Thru for your Riverence,” exclaimed Billy. “Sure, so are the dove and the vulture two birds, the lamb and the lion are two beasts; but sooner will the dove become a bird of prey, or the lion a lamb, than the like of me become a man of peace, or you a man of blood. I am the vulture, I am the beast of prey; you are the dove, the lamb. Both have our own mission; and each in his own line does his allotted work in his own way.”

As they thus beguiled by free and easy conversation the weariness of their night journey, plaintive murmuring waters, on which a tremulous light appeared, arrested the eyes and ears of the travellers.

“Here we are, by the Holy Virgin!” exclaimed Billy. They were on the banks of the Great Bann.

“The black, dreary and uninteresting tract which they had traversed made the sight and the sound welcome. They were now in a valley or dip, through which flowed a little tributary stream, along which grew a field of oats, even now green. There were also a few sheep and goats on an isolated patch of grass. A belting of pine, diversified by a group of elder and hazel trees; a copse of stunted oak wood, interspersed

and freckled with the Irish furze bushes, covered with their golden bloom, and breathing fragrance in the night air, beneath the moonlight, formed a pleasing combination of scenery. An undulating surface extended for about a mile before our party then turning into a path across some broken ground. "We shall," cried the guide, "be at the old place in a hop, step and a jump."

Sullivan's residence was deeply secluded from the haunts of men in ordinary times. It was a large straggling building, of rather an imposing aspect, remarkable for its antique but solid beams, intersecting each other with rude masonry between them of stone and clay, but all dovetailed and solid, and strong enough, like the out-houses, to resist the attack of any band of mere banditti or merry-boys. There was nothing, however, which could hold out against the power of a regular force. In the centre of civil discord, and lying between rival interests, the farmer was subject to all the evils attending on such a state of affairs. His position, never very satisfactory, between the English settler and the native Celt, was often exposed to the depredations of both. Especially at this crisis was he annoyed by the unwarrantable aggression of William's motley bands on their way to Derry,

and incommoded by his own voluntary entertainment of, and generous hospitality to the Loyalists.

The guide first entered the house and whispered a few words to the proprietor, which insured a hearty welcome for the travellers, who were at once ushered into a low apartment without ceiling, and displaying overhead old square beams of great age and substance. Sullivan was heaping turf upon the fire when they entered, and by the blaze his fine open countenance was seen, whose complexion appeared the type of health and cheerfulness, and his two clear blue eyes promised safety. He had no sooner stood up and bowed courteously, offering every hospitality to the strangers, than they handed a few gold pieces to their guide, which he persisted in refusing, at the same time handing the guardsman a pair of pistols.

“Sure,” says he, “’t isn’t for them I came wid yez. The pleasure of your company and the blessing of the clargy, are the payment the ould blunderbuss covets. Good night, gentlemen, God speed you, and may the blessing of the Lord attend you.” He was out of the house, and out of sight in a moment.

The hospitable greeting over, and the request for a night’s lodging being granted, the travellers

retired to the rooms allotted them, which were literally on the ground floor. The bedding was such that fatigue only made it tolerable. There were evidently soldiers in the house on their way to join James's forces, some lying on a settle in the kitchen, some on tables, and some even on the floor, in the death-like slumber of extreme fatigue. Strickland, in that curious spirit which youthful inquiry suggests, whilst examining their roomy but dreary lodgings, pointed out to the Father an opening in the wall, closed with square flat stones laid upon each other, but not cemented. Judging from the general aspect of the place, they conjectured that this but ill-concealed doorway led into another apartment. The suspicion that danger lurked behind, induced Strickland to remove the upper stones; when enough of them were taken out to allow for ingress, he by dint of entreaty persuaded the monk to hoist him up to the opening, through which he held the lamp. He discovered a passage with several doors on each side. He requested the Franciscan to remain where he was, and promised soon to let him know the result of his investigation. Taking his pistols and sword which the fowler had supplied, and the light, which he shaded with his hand, lest

a ray should fall on the eye of some hidden sleeper, for a loud but regular breathing warned Strickland that some one lay not far off, he moved along as noiselessly as possible, while his reverend friend raised himself on an empty whisky-cask, and made curious inquiries as to what he saw. In one corner, Strickland found some flax fit for the spindle, which he threw outside to serve as bedding. In the same room he also found some rude furniture, broken and unfit even for a night's accommodation, but no living being could he discover. Indeed, the snoring which he had heard he began to attribute to a feathered biped, which he had observed outside the house in the shape of an owl. He was about to desist from further search when he noticed a boarded partition, cutting off the room. In it was a door, which he opened. The priest in the meanwhile was outside preparing beds of the flax. Strickland entered the room; the full light of the lamp now revealed a recess, containing a decent bed with clean brown sheets in which some one lay. Hastily shading the lamp again, he gently closed the door. Perceiving that the person in bed, whoever it was, did not stir, he ventured nearer and beheld a mass of thick curly

hair, which waved over the swarthy forehead ; another glance and he recognised a face he had seen before, but could not at that moment recall. Strickland silently left the apartment and shut the door. He returned to his reverend comrade and assured him he had found nothing to alarm them. That, however, there was a young man within, whose face he could almost recognise.

“ If Hubert had not already been drowned,” said Strickland, “ I should almost have said it was his face, now I recollect it.”

Both comrades resumed their respective little rooms, and threw themselves upon their flaxen beds, and slept better than they had at first expected. Both had been weary and worn out with mental agitation. Strickland's dreams, however, seemed naturally to follow in the train of his waking thoughts and recent adventures. He was again tossing about in the little boat, and overwhelmed in the sea. The phantasy of a young imagination influenced by a dreaming spirit presented to his eye and ear terrible scenes and sounds. He at last fell into that unaccountable delusion of a dream, that he was drowned ; and felt curious to know what people thought of him while alive, particularly the one whom he

most loved. He could hear, he thought, the lamentations of his comrades, especially of Hough and Father Mansuete. Often in the hour of peril in his waking dreams had he thought of her who would never cease to lament his sad doom ; so now in his sleep he went a step beyond this, and seemed to hear the utterance of the mourners by his very bed-side where he lay dead. This became louder, and still more dreadfully distinct, till the reality of it broke the spell of dreams. He awoke, and still heard the same conversation.

“ Poor fellow ! what a shocking thing ! ” said one voice ; “ a guardsman too, and high in the king’s favour ! ”

“ Dreadful ! ” said another, “ and the Oxford man, though not exactly one of the right sort, was a good master to me : without him and the captain, my chance at Derry will be poor ; but there is a lady and her maid to whom I have directions ; but I cannot make them out ; your d—d Irish names are so strange,” continued the second voice.

In this Strickland recognised the tones and language of his sporting friend Hubert, whose death had appeared too inevitable for anything to save him from a watery grave.

“Boating is all very well on the Thames, or even on the lakes in Cumberland; but to put to sea, and venture his life on the treacherous Irish sea, was worse madness than braving the turn in affairs at Oxford. I have lost a good master, and don't know how I can ever face the Doctor again. I often told Master Henry that his new craft with so much canvas up, would be his shroud and his coffin, but little did I think my words would come true.” The poor fellow actually wept as he spoke.

“And that poor young officer, who never set foot afloat on anything less than a man-of-war! Well, they are both gone. Ay, and the popish—the Catholic priest, I mean.”

“I suspected you were a heretic,” said the person addressed, “and so did Sullivan. Begorrah! they'd think no more of putting a bullet through you, nor shooting curlew; and sure 'tisn't here you'd be to say “popish,” if you had not been secured in secret. Many's the poor Protestant Mat Sullivan has saved from the fury of the ould Irish, who have now the upper hand of the murdering Saxon. Well, the Catholic priest was drowned too. Then I am blowed if he wern't a good un on a push, and as calm as a herring pond.”

No sooner was Strickland awake to the consciousness that he was alone and safe, than he rose, rapped at the door of the father, whom he found up and just finishing his office for the day.

“Good morning my dear Father,” says he; “our boat-mate and an Irish loyalist have been talking about us;—Hubert, whom we certainly thought drowned, or his ghost, has been lamenting our loss, and is inconsolable for the supposed fate of Hough.”

“Let us at once convince our mourners,” cried the Father, “by our corporeal presence, that we are not only alive but well.”

In a moment they were before Hubert, and the Irishman, who was no other than one of Blunderbuss's attendants, whom he had left to keep a look out on the house.

The officer and the clergyman stared at Hubert as if they were looking upon a veritable ghost; the restored Hunter was still more astonished at the sudden apparition of those whom he had mourned as dead.

Intense astonishment was mingled with the delight of each party, and they were mutually and vociferously demanding some explanation of the miracle of preservation exhibited in the persons of the priest and the guards-

man on one side, and the missing Hubert on the other, when the sportsman began to gratify the general curiosity by an account of his own adventure.

CHAPTER XLV.

“War is honourable
In those who do their native rights maintain ;
In those whose swords an iron barrier are
Between the lawless spoiler and the weak ;
But in those who draw the offensive blade
For added power or gain, sordid and despicable.”

Joanna Bailie.

It turned out that Hubert had fallen from the projecting crag, to which he clung, down upon a ledge only a few feet below the high water, which receding with the tide, left the huntsman high and dry upon the rock, to which he stuck like a limpet. His hope was, that some of the numerous boats returning to gather seaweed might come near enough to take him on board. With a heavy heart and sad forboding he passed hour after hour, and no relief came to hand. At length, when evening was falling, and hope was nearly dead within him, the measured stroke of oars fell upon his ear.

“It awoke me,” said the huntsman, “from a drowsy fit of helpless despair. The same moment a boat shot into the very cave, through

the deep water which washed the ledge on which I was perched.

“ ‘ Oh ! oh ! my fine hell-bird on your infarnal roost ; what is it that brings you there ? Can't we run our tubs without a cursed spy to inform against us, and set the greedy dogs on us ? ’ cried a rough voice from the boat. I know not what I answered, but the next moment a blunderbuss was levelled at my head ; but an oath went off before the load.

“ ‘ Stop, Bill,’ says a second smuggler ; ‘ since the piece hangs fire, let us hear what the spalpeen has to say.’

“ ‘ Who are you ? what are you ? ’ asked the smugglers.

“ ‘ I am an English huntsman,’ answered I, as loud as I could.

“ ‘ What game are you scenting in such a cover as that ? You must be spirit-hunting,’ said the men.

“ I told them all that happened ; and as how you were all drowned ; and how I fastened on to that rock, when the boat was sucked into the cave.

“ ‘ If you are a huntsman,’ cried one, ‘ ’t isn't like a skulking informer you'd be. Give us a view-holloa.’

“With this I gathered up all my remaining strength, and almost fancied I was with the hounds. I gave a shout which actually belowed, resounded, and put up a hundred shouts loud enough to be heard for miles.

“‘That’s your sort,’ cried Bill, ‘your sowl; it’s not the like of that any one barrin a huntsman could put under a pack of hounds. Come down, my hearty.’

“I let myself down, half dead as I was, into the boat.”

Hubert had assumed such cheerfulness after the first noggin of whisky, which they made him swallow, that gradually with every glass it increased, until at last it grew into an unaffected and uproarious jollity, that convinced them of his early vocation. He entertained them by stories of his sporting feats in Berkshire, which could only be matched in Ireland. He cleverly co-operated with the men in sinking the forbidden merchandise and witnessed what they could not conceal from him. Besides, as he himself had participated in the honourable fraud, he could not, as they said, ‘split.’ His songs appeared to inspire them with confidence.

“‘Blood-an-ouns!’ cried the chief boatman,

‘sure ’tis yourself that id be afther making a betther Milesian, than any of us, barrin that d—d Saxon lingo you clip,’” resumed Hubert.

It appeared from Hubert’s report of himself, that the gang of smugglers, into whose hands he had fallen, having once more cautioned him, dismissed him for Derry; that on his way thither he joined, for protection, a group of Calvinists, who were attacked and robbed by Blunderbuss, and to whom, for reasons best known to himself, he deserted, and Blunderbuss was induced by his plausible story to stow him away at Mat Sullivan’s.

There were men indeed of rough exterior, to whom higher and holier impulses recurred, who while they braved the perils of the law, became a law unto themselves, and extended their protection to the persecuted of both sides. Such a man was Maurice Carrol, the attendant, left by Blunderbuss, who had felt such an interest in the dangers and difficulties of Hubert, whom accident had thrown in his way, and with whom he had passed the night.

“Sure ’tis the heart o’ me that rejoices to see ye all togither agin, but I darn’t say that to-morrow’s dawn will bring a happier and prouder day to Ireland,” cried Carrol.

“Why, my brave fellow, do you augur so badly of the siege?” asked the monk.

“’Twas no right thing I heard last night, and I fear those Derry dogs will awake. ’Twas more like a funeral coyne far away in the mountains,” said the Irishman.

“Where was it you heard it?” said Strickland, affecting mysterious seriousness to gratify Maurice’s superstition.

“Just under where we slept; this Englisher and myself. Then it seemed to move backwards and forwards across the Bann; then it died away in the direction of Derry. Then it rose and swelled fuller and louder, till it swam up the stream, and down the stream, and moaned through the streets of Coleraine; wailing away down to the soft dismal cry of a dying child. May I never die in sin, if I did not hear it as plain as I hear you now, and so must every one that was under the roof of Sullivan.”

“Heard what?” asked both the priest and the officer, at once.

“The Banshee; sure as my name’s Carrol,” said the comrade of Blunderbuss. “Oh! that dreadful cry! it is still in my ears. It’s death it betokens, or at least some shocking calamity to the house or neighbourhood it is heard to

wail over. It came loudest and strongest from Londonderry, and Lough Foyle, and seems to be the Banshee of our Irish boys."

Hubert admitted that he had more than once during the night heard a low plaintive cry, as if under the very window of the room where he slept. The voice spoke less of pain and suffering than of a low melancholy, so soft, so touching, and so mournfully prophetic; yet so deep, so overwhelming, that it stilled and drowned every other voice within or without the room, where the long drawn breath of more than one sleeper was audible.

Even beneath the civilisation and matter of fact teaching of three centuries, there is a secret recess, even in the Englishman's imagination, where superstition still lurks and lingers: and so it was even with our rustic Hubert—a solid protestant, who seemed really desirous to convince himself that the sounds which he heard, and which, in the mind of the Irish Catholic were a prophecy of evil, were nothing more than the hooting of the melancholy owl. He said that amid the woods of Hurley, he had heard as clamorous hooting from a large old owl which scared the neighbourhood into terror.

"But tare-an-ages!" exclaimed the Irishman,

“did I not hear it with my own ears? and if you doubt me, ask Kitty there forenint us, sweeping the floor, and it's the same she'll tell you—on my sowl she will. That's the way it always is with these heretics of Saxons—just as if God had no other way of conversing with our sinful hearts than the cry of the night wind, or the hooting of the screech-owl.”

“We may not,” says the French priest, “despise the frame of mind which suggests these forbodings, whether audible or not. It is however, no dogma of the Faith, to believe in such apparitions as the Banshee. The fears of those who hear, or think they hear it, may not be unfounded.”

The question on Strickland's mind was—does the impending and anticipated calamity suggest the sight and sound of the Banshee; or, does the Banshee foretell the calamity of which there has been no previous intimation or presentiment? It was amicably settled that much must depend on the frame of mind and its early impressions. The phantasies of the nursery, are seldom defaced from the memory, but in certain circumstances reappear after a lapse of years, startling the beholder, when he thought they had departed for ever from his imagination,

that to one person and not to another, under the very same circumstances, the revelation might be thus made.

The two gentlemen were not in a mood to pursue this conversation further ; and the Irishman's presence being no longer necessary, he took his leave. The clergyman and the officer, attended by Hubert, whose desire to find out his darling Di was greater than his concern for his young master, after a hearty breakfast of oatmeal cake, bacon, and fresh eggs, resumed their journey towards the scene of that tremendous struggle which was to decide the destinies of Ireland and its British colonists.

About eighty years before the date of our story, the first King James as we have cursorily mentioned, made over to the corporation of London, the ruins of ancient Derry, and about six thousand acres in the neighbourhood.

Of all the Protestant settlers in Ireland, the people of Londonderry were the most agitated by the report that Alexander Macdonnel, Earl of Antrim, notwithstanding all his trimming, had received orders from the Lord-Deputy to occupy Londonderry, and was already at the head of twelve hundred men, on his march from Coleraine.

A few young apprentices were the first to close the Ferry-gate, and let down the portcullis, in the face of the king's officers already despatched from Antrim's regiment. It were, indeed, a painful and a thriftless task to describe the hours, the weeks of suspense, anxiety, hardship, and starvation endured by the indomitable and stubborn sufferers who defended the citadel. Suffice it to say, that famine was becoming every day more severe; for Kirke thought it unsafe to make any attempt either by land or water on the lines of the besiegers. Pestilence with its train of horrors was setting in. Fifteen officers had died of fever in one day within the walls. Many and brave attempts had been made to relieve the city. Detachments were, at the hour of our travellers' arrival, sent out to infest the rear of the blockading army, to cut off supplies.

Strickland's eye was directed inquiringly to the countenance of every creature he met; his ear was open to every word, in the hope of hearing something of the king, to whom it was his first business to repair.

He had not been apprised of the fact, that while D'Avaux was on his way to Dublin, James hastened to Londonderry, only to return imme-

diately again to Dublin. His Majesty had found his army concentrated a few miles south of the city. The French generals who had sailed with him from Brest were in his train ; and two of them—Rosen and Maumont—were placed over the head of Richard Hamilton. Rosen was a native of Livonia, who had in early youth become a soldier of fortune, had fought his way to distinction, and though utterly destitute of the graces and accomplishments characteristic of the Court of Versailles, he was on account of his military fame in favour there. His temper seems to have been savage, his manners coarse ; his language is represented as a hodge-podge jargon of various dialects of French and German. Even those who thought best of him owned that his looks were grim and Satanic.

The little which is related of Maumont is to his honour.

James had been assured, and fully expected, that the city would yield as soon as it was known that he was before the walls ; this was also the belief of our newly arrived little party, who were totally ignorant that James, on finding himself mistaken, accompanied by Rosen, had returned to Dublin.

May passed away and June arrived, and still Londonderry held out. Many and various were the sallies and skirmishes; but the advantage had been with the garrison. It seemed that the siege must be turned into a blockade. It must be long before they could hope to reduce the town by main force. Some, therefore, of the most noble youths of the oldest families in Ireland, bound themselves by an oath to make their way into the works, or perish in the attempt. Captain Butler, son of Lord Montgarret, undertook to lead the sworn men, amongst whom was our brave young friend O'Brian Clare, to the attack. On the walls the colonists were drawn up in three ranks. The office of those who were behind was to load the muskets for the front rank. The Irish came on boldly with a fearful screech, but after long, courageous and desperate fighting, were hurled back. Amid the thickest fire might be seen women serving out water and ammunition to their husbands and brothers. At length, after many hundreds of the Irish had fallen, their chiefs ordered a retreat to be sounded. Nothing now was left but to try the effect of hunger.

When it was known at Dublin that Kirke and his squadron had arrived on the coast of Ulster,

it created great alarm at Dublin. Even before these tidings reached them, D'Avaux had given it as his opinion that Hamilton was unequal to the difficulty of the situation. It was therefore resolved that Rosen should be sent down with all speed to take the chief command. No sooner had a hundred of his men been slain, than his fury raged horribly. Was he—an old soldier, an embryo Marshal of France, trained in the camp, a scientific warrior—to be baffled by a mob? He would raze the city to the ground; he would spare neither man, woman nor child. As to the leaders, death were too merciful for them; he would rack them; he would roast them alive.

In his rage he ordered a shell to be thrown into the town with a letter containing horrible menaces. According to his diabolical threat, a multitude who were near and dear to the besieged were driven under the walls of Londonderry, to be starved to death, in the sight of their countrymen, friends, and kinsmen. It was imagined that this piteous sight would quell the spirit of the colonists: but in vain. An order was given that no man should surrender on pain of death; and no man uttered the word.

“And is this the Isle of Saints?” cried

Strickland. "What a monster of iniquity is this General, whose cowardly atrocity demands the gibbet to exhibit his carrion carcasses to scorn! Never will I fight under his banner, nor lend my aid to his fiendish manœuvres. To our merciful king, the restoration of his three crowns, were dearly, too dearly purchased by such deeds of hellish massacre. Were the king within a hundred miles, I would hasten to him on foot and crave his withdrawal of Rosen."

A soldier, whose sympathy with the victims and indignation against Rosen were the same as those expressed by the guardsman, happened, at the moment Strickland made this remark, to be hastening to his post in one of the avenues leading to the city, which was closely guarded to exclude provisions from the garrison. Judging from Strickland's accent and bearing that he was a gentleman or officer, disguised for some purpose best known to himself, and having overheard his ejaculations, accosted him, and warned him of his dangerous situation; then courteously directed him to a place of safety, which commanded a magnificent view of the king's troops in battle array: then making a deep reverence to the Franciscan, he passed on.

From the slight elevation to which the two

gentlemen had been directed, they beheld a goodly sight. On the south they distinctly discerned the tents of Ireland. Along the left bank of the Foyle were displayed the horsemen who had followed Lord Galmoy from the valley of the Barrow. Their chief was, of all the Irish captains, the most dreaded and the most abhorred by the Protestants. He had drilled and disciplined his men with skill, authority, and care; but many are the frightful stories we are told of his barbarity and cruelty. Long lines of tents occupied by the infantry of Butler and O'Neal, of Lord Slane and Lord Gormans-ton, by Nugent's Westmeath men, by Eustace's Kildare men, and by Cavanagh's Kerry men, extending northwards, till they again approached the winding water's side. The river was fringed with forts and batteries, which no vessel could pass with impunity. These were only some of the features in the martial prospect which met the gaze of the two strangers. Of the general disposition of the royal troops nothing less than a map of the siege could give an adequate idea.

Such was the state of affairs, and such the aspect of the place, when our shipwrecked mariners found themselves almost within the

reach of the cannons of the garrison ; undistinguished, unattached, without credentials, and unknown to either party, they were in a fair way to be suspected by both.

The young officer felt like a fish out of water, and regretting his isolated, useless, and dangerous position, and anxious for action, was deliberating with the clergyman on the best course to adopt, when a sudden and impetuous sally of the most dashing of the colonists was made from the gate, and a living tide, like a torrent which has burst its barriers, rushed forth in the direction of the priest and the soldier, who had descended from their place of observation. In avoiding the fell swoop of the Englishers, they fell in with the royal post from Dublin, with dispatches from James, who had just established this only conveyance of messages between the capital and head-quarters—but a slow contrivance, for the couriers went on foot. It was from this courier that Strickland first learnt that James was in Dublin, surrounded by his court.

It was the work of a moment to mount one of the riderless horses of the Royal cavalry, which Hubert very cleverly caught and led to Strickland. The guardsman, turning the horse's head

directly for Dublin, dashed off like lightning, to confer with the King in person, and report the barbarous atrocities of Rosen to his Majesty. The good priest repaired to the wounded and the dying, to administer consolation and the last sacraments of the Church. Hubert declared that the hunting-field was, after all, but child's play to this terrible scene of the war and fury of the bloody fight. His game was probably to play the Englisher and gain access to the garrison, for he had been speaking to a lingering colonist as he returned from the last sally to the fortress.

In the meantime Rosen, as we observed, being baffled and compelled to abandon, after a sharp fight, his project of undermining the walls, persisted in his cruelty, even to poor women and children ; so that many brave Irish officers declared, weeping with pity, and burning with indignation, that the cries of the poor women between the camp and a portion of the city, would ring on for ever in their ears.

No sooner had Robert Strickland carried the tidings of these horrid events to James at Dublin, than that monarch, who always evinced peculiar compassion for the English, even when fighting against him, was startled by an atrocity

of which the civil wars of England furnished no example.

“That Rosen is a barbarous Muscovite,” cried James, in the presence of the French ambassador D’Avaux.

Melfort could not refrain from adding, that if Rosen had been an Englishman, he would have been hanged, and that he, Melfort, the king’s secretary, would have recommended the measure.

Strickland, on his return from Dublin, found the leaders of the royal army in serious consultation. They could not but observe that some of their followers were disheartened by the loss they had sustained; and which, as is the case under such circumstances, had been of the bravest and most valued of their men. It was to be feared, that if the troops were suffered to exhaust their zeal and strength in the attempt to capture a place which Rosen had pronounced at first quite untenable by the defenders, new officers would be required to succeed those who had been slain. Robert Strickland, with others, was nominated by the king himself to supply the place of the fallen. Now equipped in all the brilliancy and untarnished splendour of a captain of the guard, he was appointed to the command of a chosen body of nearly five hundred

men, to retrieve at least some of the fortunes of the war.

The first sight which greeted the eye of the young guardsman, as he urged on his fresh charger to his new quarters, was a gallows conspicuously erected on one of the bastions most exposed to the view of the besiegers.

A message was conveyed to Rosen by an English ensign bearing in his hand a flag of truce.

When he had arrived opposite to those, who by their advancing to receive the message, seemed to be the leaders of the besiegers; the young Englishman commanded his trumpeter to sound a parley.

“I summon you in the name of King William, and in that of the Rev. George Walker, the chief governor of the garrison, specially commissioned by the citizens of Londonderry, to set at liberty all those poor women and innocent children, whom, contrary to the laws of God and even your own Prince, whom you call King, you have unmercifully penned up to die a miserable death under the walls, and under our eyes,” said he, addressing himself to a savage-looking officer who was on horseback, very near to Strickland, on whom he

cast a grim smile. The young man who seemed a rough soldier, but an energetic speaker, said "I herewith present you a petition"—here he handed it to the Livonian General—"earnestly desiring you, on behalf of the Catholic prisoners, to send them a confessor to prepare them for their last hour." Captain Strickland directed his horse so that his motions became the object of both armies; for he had evidently been clothed with authority, or intrusted with some message by King James.

It is probable that there was, without any imputation of cowardice on either party, a merciful desire on both sides that this embassy might save bloodshed, famine, and all the miseries of a blockade; or, at least, that Rosen would desist from the torments he was inflicting upon the victims he was sacrificing to his fury outside the walls.

Before Rosen could make any reply, one shout went up throughout the camp, and seemed to shake the foundations of Derry, vociferating far and wide, "We own no king, but our lawful sovereign, King James."

"Return to them that sent you," said the Muscovite, muttering in bad English, interlarded with broken French, "and tell them that when

prentice boys and English rebels—robbers of Irishmen—assume the province of soldiers, they can only be treated as they deserve.”

The shouts of defiance were still rending the air, and all eyes were centred in Rosen, when the young Englishman, first after a rapid and searching scrutiny of Strickland, slipped a different document into the new captain's hand, open, and intended probably for his eye.

It was addressed to Richard Hamilton, and was couched in terms much more submissive and respectful than those in the petition directed to Rosen. Strickland was retiring with it; but before he could do so, the messenger gave him a look of deep concern. That look had something in it, which found its way to Strickland's heart; it was a glance, not of recognition, but of earnest supplication. Still, Strickland kept himself cool, resolute, soldierly, and discreet.

“Rosen's eyes are upon us,” he said. “Say at once, who desired you to intrust this to me.”

“The Honourable O'Brian Clare,” said the messenger, “desired me to present it to the first English officer whom I could find in the army of James, and, if possible, without the knowledge

of Rosen. The prisoners wrote the petition in great dismay, and are anxious that it should be read at once, without a moment's delay."

While Strickland went on reading: "We are willing to shed our blood for the king, but we think it hard to die the death of thieves and heathen, without the benefit of the clergy or the last rites of the Church—and this all in consequence of our own companions in arms."

He had scarcely finished the last line, from which he was turning his eyes to the bearer of them, when he heard some one reciting in exquisite taste, time, and cadence, a passage from Virgil on the siege of Troy. Then in the same metre rushing enthusiastically into the Iliad, with still deeper pathos and feeling.

"By Jupiter," cried the reciter to an Irish sailor who was with him, behind some Irish troopers, "The siege of Troy was nothing to this." Then, as if soliloquizing to himself, and carried away by the scene before him, which at this moment was hushed, "If the old Doctor turns me adrift, I will write the '*Londonderriad*,' after the manner of Homer, and make my fortune."

The voice was familiar to Strickland; but being no great classic, and absorbed in the

document addressed to the officer second in command, he was hesitating, when the scholar rushed into the very arms of the messenger exclaiming, as if indifferent to all present, "*Immisit fugam teneris atrumque timorem*. My dear Tate how came you here?" Then looking from Tate to Strickland, Hough, for it was the very man, cried "*Fortunate ambo*;" then declaimed, "*State viri; quæ causa viæ? Quive estis in armis? Quove tenetis iter?*"

"For Heaven's sake!" said Strickland mildly to his friend, between whom and the messenger from the Derrians there seemed such an intimacy, "be English, be serious, for I see an officer approaching this gentleman, whom it will not be in my power to protect."

"First, let me ask him," said Hough, "what a member of Magdalen College can have to do with the puddle blooded settlers and squatters. Have you really volunteered in the service of Roundheads, and mixed yourself up with the spawn and refuse of Calvinists and rebels?" asked Hough of Tate. Before he could say another word, an officer politely approached the messenger, saying he had orders to conduct him safely immediately to his own quarters, while there was time, and hastened Tate away;

who had already lingered too long on his way back to the Governor, for whom he had such unwelcome tidings.

Already Father Mansuete was with the prisoners, whose fate seemed inevitable. Both Strickland and his somewhat inconvenient friend Hough, with upturned eyes, watched anxiously the movements on the bastions. There was a pause of awful suspense, between life and death, which seemed to thrill both those inside and outside the walls with horror. Strickland, leaving Hough to the guidance of the Irish smuggler, who secretly supplied the army with spirits, and was known to the Irish troops, repaired to deliver the paper to Hamilton, whom he expected to supersede Rosen as Commander-in-Chief. He was not long at a loss; for a sudden movement and murmur of applause was heard along the ranks.

Richard Hamilton once more assumed the chief command, while Rosen might be seen reading orders which he had just received from Dublin, whither he was recalled.

No sooner had the superseded commander retired, than a tremendous shout was raised by the whole Irish camp.

The petition from the prisoners within the

walls was instantly presented by Strickland to the new Commander-in-Chief. The defenders of Derry were immediately informed that gentler measures would be tried than those which had brought so much reproach on Rosen.

The gallows disappeared from the bastions. Strickland breathed more freely. His countryman had convinced him that he could fight under his command without dishonour. All the noble-hearted and the brave among the besiegers were impatient of delay ; they mercifully longed to put an end to the sufferings of the wretched garrison, and to deliver their friends the prisoners.

The state of the city was becoming hour by hour more frightful—the fire of the enemy sharper and more constant. Strickland fought like a lion ; he led a furious charge to the very walls, from which missiles of bricks, cased in hot lead, were showered down upon the assailants. Springing from his horse, at the head of his men, he cheered them on and desisted not from the attack, till one of the gates was battered in, and one of the bastions laid in ruins. Surely, thought Strickland, a handful of resolute men may now force their way in and at least rescue the prisoners, provided that their strength be

equal to their bravery—we may at least save Clare.

“On! on!” he cried with enthusiasm. “Follow me, my lads,” he called out to his men. “Never let it be said we were beaten by canting Calvinists and shop-boys.”

Throwing himself into the breach, he fought his way at the head of his party: most of his followers were killed, and he himself could not have escaped the same fate, but for the heavy fire of carbines which Hamilton had brought to bear upon the defenders who were personally opposed to the valiant Captain.

The assailants displayed as much coolness in their manner of advancing as spirit in the assault. Strickland repeatedly showed as much skill in protecting his own followers, as boldness in annoying the enemy. At length they gained their way so high on the ascent, that a few of them actually fired into the barricade against the defenders who lay exposed to their aim; but so situated were the prisoners by accident or design, that the assailants could not level their guns so as to fire upon the enemy, without endangering their friends. The city was enveloped in smoke and the walls rang to the cries of the combatants. The soldiers, ani-

mated by the voice of Strickland, pressed forward. In the midst of this scene of strife and confusion the besiegers had nearly possession of the fortress.

The Commander-in-Chief perceiving that the breaches were repaired with indefatigable activity, and that the attack might be eventually repelled, and one regiment at least must be sacrificed in the attempt, encouraged the Irish to put up one wild, long, loud cheer of exultation. This entered the ears and pierced the hearts of the starving garrison, who were by a stranger informed soon after, that the army of James was rejoicing on account of the fall of Enniskillen ; that now they had no chance of being relieved by land or by water, and for the sake of humanity they were exhorted to save their lives by capitulation. A flag of truce arrested mutual hostilities. The beseiged consented to negotiate.

During the short armistice, and settlement of the conditions of surrender, Strickland in falling back to the rear with the wounded and weary remnant of his men, arrived at the very spot where the recovered man and his master, Hough, were in close consultation. The sportsman had some object for which he desired to preserve his

life and avoid unnecessary danger. That object was Di Vine. He indulged therefore in his Berkshire accent, and made up to some of the English soldiers who had served under Lovelace in the manner we have already described. So rough and raw were they, that few of them could manage their pieces at all; or if, by dint of effort, one out of four of these fellows could succeed in discharging his musket, no matter in what direction, he thought he had performed a wonderful feat of warfare.

About this stage of the distress, there were not wanting voices, which in low tones murmured with a terrible meaning—"first the horses' hides, and then the prisoners, and then each other."

It was at this crisis, as Clare afterwards related, half in jest, but with the other half horribly in earnest, that a corpulent citizen, whose roseate hue and undiminished bulk were strongly contrasted with the living skeletons which surrounded him, thought it only prudent to conceal himself from the covetous eyes which followed him with cannibal looks whenever he appeared in the streets; so that "the fat man of Londonderry" became a proverb in their mouths, as a warning to the too prosperous man who excited envy and cupidity.

The people, Hubert was informed, perished so fast, that it was impossible for the survivors to perform the rites of sepulture. The protestant clergy were not equal to the task. Only on special occasions, and for Catholic prisoners, was a priest admitted. Father Mansuete was now the most active and favoured of the Catholic clergy. Leprosy, the offspring of unwholesome diet, had made its loathsome appearance, making the victims of its foul and polluting touch an intolerable torment to themselves and revolting to others. There they lay helpless, hopeless, amid the poisoned stench which they could not but imbibe from the bodies of the dying and the dead.

“Some English women, assisted by Irish girls in coarse comical dresses, watch over them and nurse them night and day. They themselves are safe enough, for the Derry boys will not go within half a mile of them. There’s only one English girl who cannot stand the nuisance; she declared it wasn’t fit for a lady, nor lady’s lady,” declared Hubert.

“From the description the Berkshire swain gave,” continued he, “I see fear as how it is Miss Di, and I have been trying how to get into the city, to get her out of the stench; but I see

no way open. I tried," says he, "at night, but the garrison were too wide awake. I saw a fellow attempt to dive under that great dam, which they call the Boom, lying across the river; but I am danged if he weren't shot as dead as a door-nail. Another, for trying the same thing, was hanged. If the Captain doesn't think it his duty to shoot me, I'll e'en venture all for that ere wench inside. If any of those other chaps gets her away, she'd have him, and I shall lose my Joe."

The treaty at this moment was broken off, and the conflict about to recommence; so that before he could be made acquainted with the gallant intention of the sportsman, Leander for his Hero, Strickland was recalled to his post.

Hough, in the hope of gaining some tidings of his mysterious and almost ubiquitous Lily Penderel, encouraged Hubert in his daring adventure, which he undertook to carry into effect that very night, and went away to reconnoitre the Boom, while the forces on both sides were preparing for renewed hostilities.

The Irish smuggler, who was intimately acquainted with all the local points, detecting a weak place during the general lull which pre-

ailed, resolved to enter the city, and rescue his countryman O'Brian, whom he had heard of from Hough. He was stealthily creeping under the screen of a rising ground towards "Windmill Hill" when he was discovered and shot by a sentinel. It was, therefore, evident to Hough that Hubert's only chance was, as an Englisher and an Orangeman, to gain admission to a vessel of the fleet which was already in Lough Foyle. To his delight he saw the huntsman speedily hasten towards the sea for that purpose.

In the meantime, Hough resolving in his mind the extraordinary scenes of peril into which his own wandering and wayward course had brought him, and comparing the siege of Londonderry with all which he had read of Troy, and full of the destinies of Ireland, associated the Revolution in Great Britain, and the events of the day indissolubly with Lily Penderel, as if she were Helen, and the sole cause of the warfare.

It was in this state of mind he contemplated his course of love, which had not yet run smooth. "To retrieve my lost fortunes, and the friendship of the Doctor," said he to himself hopefully, "I will write the true account of an eye witness; '*Magna pars fui.*' I will astonish

Oxford and the world with the "*Londonderriad*."
I will write the motto thus :

"The Oxford man his wandering way reclaims,
And steers once more his eight-oars up the Thames."

With this spirited resolution and impromptu, he took his stand upon a commanding eminence—the very same to which for safety he had been directed before—and availing himself of the organised state of the troops in position, and displaying themselves to great advantage in battle array, as their pikes and arms glittered brightly beneath the evening sun of July, he pulled out a sheet of foolscap paper, and on it delineated faithfully the real disposition of the Irish forces.

As unconscious of danger as enthusiastic in his project, he was just raising his head to take in a glimpse of the water, when two vessels caught his astonished eye. Before he could note them on his plan, a yell of triumph rose from the banks, where, in another glance, he perceived the Irish rushing to their boats, preparing to board the first ship. Instantly the thunders of a broadside from a man-of-war directed against the Irishmen shook the whole place.

This was the thirtieth of July. The sun was going down. The sermon in the cathedral was over, the congregation had separated, the arrangements for further defence were desperately advancing, when the sentinels on the tower saw the sails of three vessels coming up the Foyle. Soon there was a stir in the Irish camp ; the besiegers were on the alert for miles along the shores. The ships were in extreme peril. At length the little squadron came in, in defiance of everything, to the point most exposed to the fire of the enemy. Here the Mountjoy, one of the convoy—whose master, Micaiah Browning, a native of Londonderry, was bringing a cargo of provisions from England—took the lead and went right at the boom. The huge barricade across the water gave way with a terrible crash, but the shock was such, that the Mountjoy rebounded and stuck in the mud. It was the wild Irish cry of exultation at the disaster which had startled Hough, followed by the roar of the well-directed broadside poured on the Irish boats, which threw them into disorder and diverted the attention of the draughtsman from his chart. Before he could comprehend the meaning of the tumultuous cry, and the thunder of the frigate's artillery, the second

merchantman, the *Phoenix*, commanded by Douglas, with a cargo of meal from Scotland, also under the escort of the Dartmouth frigate, dashed desperately at the breach which the *Mountjoy* had made, and was in a moment within the fence. Meantime the tide was rising fast. The *Mountjoy* began to move, and soon cut her way through the broken stakes and floating spars. But her brave master was no more; a shot from one of the batteries had struck him. He died nobly, in sight of his native city, which by his self-devotion he had saved from starvation.

Through the falling darkness of night, the multitude who covered the walls of the city when the *Mountjoy* grounded, looked as fearfully livid and deathlike as phantoms to the eye of the beholder, by the uncertain fire-flashes of the guns; and it is easy to imagine how their countenances were changed from sadness to joy, when at ten o'clock that summer's evening, the two ships safely arrived at the quay, and the work of unlading was complete.

Hough was by no means indifferent to the scene of excitement which awoke the echoes of the night. His sympathies were with the men

of Derry. Suffering humanity was relieved, and he rejoiced in its relief. Not knowing what shelter to seek, he threw himself down, with his cloak closely drawn around him, beneath the covering of some furze, now yellow with fragrant bloom.

Throughout the live-long night there was little sleep on either side of the wall. The benighted Oxford man listened to the shouts of revelry and triumph, as if he would catch the very words. His sleepless eyes were gazing at the bonfires, as they brightly blazed along the circuit of the ramparts. The Irish guns roared all night; and all night the bells of the rescued city made answer to the Irish guns with a peal of joyous defiance.

But neither the roar of the guns, nor the response of the bells, nor the relief of the city, nor the event of the siege, was anything in the mind of Hough to be compared to the fate of his Sister of Charity. How would *she* feel? What would *she* say? How would *she* look? But above all—what would *she* think of him? And when would Hubert return to him? These were themes which left but little room in his mind for the grand design of the Derriad.

“I will see her at any risk before it is too late ;” and with this heroic resolution he rose from his uneasy couch, as the first faint streaks of light in the East, warned him of another day and its perils. This was the thirty-first of July, which after a brief lull, was ushered in by the joyous sounds of the bells and the thunders of the Irish guns ; and as the batteries continued to play, they would probably take in their range that space over which it was necessary for Hough to pass before he could reach the walls. While he was debating with himself the least dangerous approach, or whether he should swim for it, the sun, glorious and gorgeous, rose over camp and tower, and tinged the glowing water with a flood of golden light, while the bright ripple on its surface reflected a thousand tints.

The banks on both sides of the Lough were covered with huts, or tents surmounted with banners that floated out gaily to the breeze, and as far as the eye of Hough could reach, were hosts of armed men studded over the country. Vast columns of infantry were already to be seen, cavalry and artillery too, their arms glittering, and here and there a distinguished plume was waving. Hough stood motionless and spell-

bound. He could see horsemen galloping from the dense squares, and riding hurriedly to and fro. Sudden bursts of fire, shot into the calm morning sky, and came down in sparkling, falling stars, over the camp.

Once more the deep roar of cannon boomed out ; the distant shouts of mastering defiance ; and above all other sounds from the garrison, the thundering voice of roaring Meg, an antique gun, the gift of the fishmongers of London. She had bellowed terribly one hundred and four days, incessantly, and might well now be hoarse. The whole plain was in motion, before Hough could resolve on any step, for he was girded by perils. The very turf trembled beneath the measured tramp of marching men. Regiment flowed on after regiment, like waves of the sea ; squadrons poured on in a ceaseless tide, as they descended towards the river's sides ; while a long dark line wound through the bodies of horsemen and foot-soldiers, at once marking the artillery moving silently over the grassy field. The clang of trumpets and beat of drums—the well-timed step of thousands to the march—filled up and absorbed his every sense. All that he had ever read of in Virgil or Homer ; all that he had ever conceived of

warlike preparations or display, faded into nothing, at the terribly grand spectacle which lay before him, at once his admiration and his danger.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Grim-visaged death, and fierce despair,
Hard unbelief, with aspect sneering;
And ruin with affrighted stare
Disastrous through the gloom appearing.—*Griffin.*

FROM Hough's contemplation of his alarming position, which was painfully succeeding his classical musings, he was suddenly aroused by a voice asking, "Who are you? What are you doing here? Escape for your life or you are a dead man." He felt a hand upon his shoulder, he turned round, it was, as the voice led him to hope, O'Brian Clare, whose eye was rivetted on his face, while his lips parted with eagerness. His appearance was sadly changed, and his countenance had lost its beautiful glow of health; his voice at first was low and hoarse; he put to his lips some cordial which he had secured, and by degrees it grew stronger and clearer, and rolled out in its wonted rich roundness, but still destitute of the merry ring of better times. Suffice it to say, there

was but little opportunity of explanation for Hough, and though so far foiled, he resolved to hazard his fatal stratagem. He had marked that quarter of the city which was most remote from the chief point of attack, and to which he told O'Brian, he could advance through the aid of a little manœuvre, without what he considered danger.

“Desist from your mad purpose,” cried O'Brian, with unusual severity, “Collect your roving thoughts, man; your courage is the energy of despair, and will urge you to your own destruction, as well as that of her whom you seek. You are evidently worn out with fatigue, want of rest, and terrible excitement. Be calm; we have still time to think of some means for your safety and escape; as for me, I shall be recognised and restored to my place, at the head of a regiment at once.”

“But,” said Hough, “how came you to escape?”

“’Tis a long tale,” cried O'Brian, “but I will tell you. At the moment the laden merchantmen gained the quay, and were welcomed with noise enough to awaken the dead which lay unburied around us, I happened to be walking up and down a passage, to which my beat was con-

find : when at one end of it, as if by accident, near an open window, lay on a camp-bed a young man, evidently in great pain from a recent wound. The fair complexion and blue eyes bespoke him an Englishman. Pillows supported his head and shoulders. He raised his dull sunken eyes as if by an effort as I entered, and something like a faint smile of recognition passed over his pale face. I knew him at once, though he was dreadfully altered. I had met him once or twice at Oxford, and I caught a glimpse of him among your crew at Hurley. He told me in few words, slowly and painfully, while all the blood he had remaining seemed to rush to his face, that he had openly espoused the cause of William, and had entered Derry with a number of English rustics, with the intention of eventually fighting under Schomberg. He added that only yesterday he had been wounded by a chance bullet, on his return from a parley he had held with our fellows, whose admonition to return to the fortress he had neglected, and exceeded the time allowed. He had unfortunately quarrelled with his brother officers, whom he despised, and who disliked him. Had it not been for the Sisters of Charity, who were admitted in the absence of a doctor

who is scarcely above the rank of a farrier, he must have sunk at once under his sufferings and privations.

“ It was during my stolen and accidental visit to him that two of these good women came to his sick couch. They appeared to possess an unaccountable influence over him, protestant as he is. But the messengers of mercy, the angels of the church made no apparent difference between the two parties who were so exasperated against each other. The younger nun was the most beautiful that ever sacrificed herself to God. Indeed she looked too heavenly to link her fate to any man on earth. Yes, my boy, sure enough 'tis the convents that rob us of the prettiest girls in Christendom. While the elder nun busied herself with mixing medicines and preparing bandages and lint, doubtless for many other patients, both prisoners and defenders, the younger leech under her direction addressed herself seriously, but tenderly, to salving the wound, to which she applied a delicious balm, the odour of which was not only diffused as it breathed a perfume throughout the passage, but prevailed over the stench of the dying and the dead, like the fragrance of paradise over the corruption of the world.

“To me who had breathed the tainted atmosphere, it communicated a refreshing coolness; its perfume to the fevered demi gave immediate relief; as a minute before he groaned in anguish, so now he sighed for pleasure, as he sank back on his couch to enjoy the ease which the dressing bestowed. But by all the saints, if I go on in this way, I shall soon be as bad as yourself, and lost entirely by the same folly. Well, as I was going to say, among the dwellings within the city, there was anxious hurrying from room to room. Wives, mothers, sisters, and those who bore less sacred names, vied with each other in stowing away the welcome provisions. The hurrahs, the cheers, the incessant rattle of musketry, and the concentrated attention of the inhabitants to the timely supplies which barely saved them from starving, diverted even the garrison from every other object.

“I seized upon the golden opportunity, and just as I was thinking of the safest place to dive into the water, under the window of my cell, in comes the late chaplain of the King who had been his rounds. He recollected me at once, and divined my intention, motioned the nuns out of the room, and in a moment returned with a complete monastic habit, which says he, belonged

to a holy monk who is now in heaven. He was carried off by the leprosy. 'Sure 'twill be the death of me,' I cried, 'May be I had better trust to the sword or the famine.'

" 'If the spirit of its late wearer be upon you, you will be happy in life or death. If you have confidence in the efficacy of holy water, with which I have purified the garments, and in the protection of God and the saints—especially St. Michael, who has defended you in the day of battle—he will be your shield and tower of defence. Are you afraid ?'

" 'The divil a bit!' says I. 'I beg your Reverence's pardon.' With this I put myself into the monk's dress, visited the death-bed of the Catholic prisoners boldly, said the Latin prayers and a solemn 'De profundis' like any priest, and looked so much the dead image of the dead monk, that I was afraid of myself. My head having been garnished with a few long, flowing locks of the dead man's hair, which shaded my face and gave it a look of the original wearer, especially as it appeared obscurely under the hood; some few of the citizens kept at a respectful distance, craving my blessing; but the greater number of all sorts fled from my infected person, as I recited the 'Miserere' in

good Irish accent of Latin, as if I were on my way from one tainted leper to another.

“Just as I was congratulating myself on my escape, and was clear^d of all actual danger, and still entreating the departed—to whose garb I had succeeded—to give me a portion of his saintly spirit and to intercede for me, whom should I meet, cheek-by-jowl, but that roving rascal hunter, your Hurley beauty! He was making capital of the clod-pated Englishers, and playing off my Lord Lovelace with some of whose rabble he knew perfectly well, and one or two were listening to his story, as he hastened from the water with a load of the newly arrived stores.

“I gave him a look—and such a look, too, upon my sacred word of honour—as brought him to his senses; but not before he had addressed me as Captain. The Englishers thought him mad to come so near a man infected with the leprosy. I warned him; but, either to deceive the bystanders or myself in taking me for a priest, he came up and said boldly, ‘Craving your Reverence’s pardon, I want you to marry us at once.’ ‘Marry whom, my son?’ I asked, in a priestly tone. ‘The little English lay sister and myself,’ was the audacious reply.

‘You graceless reprobate!’ cried I, in a voice of solemn rebuke, ‘How could I marry a nun, even to a Catholic, not to mention a renegade or a heretic?’ He then whispered in my ear that what he said was only to keep up appearances; that the fact of the matter was, that the Reverend Governor, parson Walker, had agreed to marry him and Di Vine in case no other clergyman could be found to “splice” them, on consideration that she would in the meantime solemnly recant and abjure the errors of popery. ‘She has, to my certain knowledge, done so,’ said the impudent rascal. ‘Both of us, as good gospel Protestants, and sworn subjects of William III., are after the wedding breakfast, which the valiant clergyman supplies, to make the best of our way back to Hurley, where my poor old granny will rejoice to see us again.’

“The upshot of the matter is,” said the liberated guardsman, “that here I am safe and sound, but not the man I was two months ago. According to the plan settled between us, I lay under a break of bushes forment Windmill Hill, till the elder of the holy sisters whom I have mentioned—God reward her—brought me my own regimentals at the crack of day, and carried back the infected robes. I was, upon my sacred

honour, more glad to get rid of the robes than to pray that my last end might be like that of the late owner of them ; so far as this life went anyhow."

Clare having finished his account of himself, urged upon Hough the necessity of their immediate removal ; further delay, he said, must be his destruction. Taking his friend therefore by the arm, he led him to the bank of the river ; in another moment both were in one of the Irish boats moored under the bank, and pulling away as if they were on the Isis ; no sooner had they touched the opposite shore, than Clare, handing Hough out of the boat, which he sent off with a kick drifting down the stream, cried with vehemence, " Dart off for your life as hard as your legs can carry you, up the river, and on to a place called Strabane, and on the arrival of the Celtic army there, inquire for the head quarters of the Commander-in-Chief, where you will find me able to protect you."

Hough set off accordingly up the left bank of the Foyle. The Irish guns were playing upon the city all this time, and it was only by *détour* that Clare was enabled to rejoin his regiment, whose thinned ranks were soon filled up, and of which he instantly resumed the command. Hough's

lonely road wound for some time along the course of the river Foyle. Not a human being came in sight, not a goat or a sheep was to be seen on the pastures. The solitude in the broad glare of the summer sun was oppressive. At length he came to an old fortress ; he entered the ruins and pulled out his drawing materials, which he had about him, to complete his plan of the siege of Derry, while the most prominent features of the grand panorama were fresh in his memory ; even at this distance, he could from a broken fragment descry something grey and dim against the sky, which he assured himself was the airy and dwarfish city presenting to him the situation and rough outlines of the wall and the tall tower, and so far giving him at least the relative situations and bearings of the points of attack and defence.

He stretched himself on the grass in the shade, and lulled with the sounds of sweetest melody, of rippling water, and buzzing bee, and tuneful skylark, he fell into a deep slumber, which nature so painfully required. So deep and sound was that sleep, that Hough hardly knew where he was, when it was broken by the tramp of horses, the rough voices and accents of Irish soldiers and Rapparees. These were a

troop of Galmoy's well-trained, much-dreaded horse, on a foraging expedition. They plundered the country, and at the same time intercepted any of the straggling Englishers whom they met. The officer at the head of the horsemen held the rank of cornet. He sprang from his saddle on arriving at the ruins, and ascended the highest part of the round tower, to reconnoitre the neighbourhood, and as the sun was still hot and high in the heavens, he ordered his men to halt and rest their horses. He was one of the merry boys from the vale of the Barrow, and, like his chief, the dread of the Englishers.

“What have we here, my gay lads?” cries he. “A Saxon spy;—see, here is his map of our positions, and the distribution of the Colonel's encampment, with a view doubtless, of surprising us in the rear. I hope, sir,” says he, with a mock politeness, “I hope we don't intrude; but having seen so much of your clever sketch, we will hope for the pleasure of your company on our way to head-quarters, where we'll have the honour of introducing you to our mild and tender-hearted Colonel—sure 'tis himself that will give you the welcome. By the same token,” says he, pulling out a flask of whisky from his havresack, “we can drink the

valiant Colonel's health and success to King James."

To such a reasonable proposition at a moment when Hough was exhausted, he could see no objection, for he was a loyalist and could not object to the health of an officer in the king's service, though he had not attached himself to either party, and thus he highly delighted the young officer.

"Since you are so liberal, I wish to cultivate your acquaintance, and shall be proud to learn your name and address, as I must enter them on my list. Be aisy with your quare ways," says the Cornet, forgetting his holiday language and military courtesy, "Sure, 'tisin't the son of Jack Howe you are—a tall, lean, pale, haggard, meagre-looking nagur, the vice-chamberlain to the queen of the usurper?"

"My name is Hough," cried he, "a nephew of Doctor Hough of Oxford."

"But you must allow me, sure, to escort you," said the officer. Then turning to one of his men, continued, "Paddy Doyle, mount this protestant gentleman on my own favourite nag. Now then, by your lave, Mr. Hough, we are ready to wait on you."

In Hough's situation, such an intimation was

but too clearly to his mind a command. He at once mounted the horse now saddled for his use, and Cornet O'Neile rode by his side.

The native gentleness and natural urbanity of the officer's manners, though often evinced by un-English and unpolished language, almost reconciled Hough to his extraordinary and novel lot.

"I have half a mind," said the Irishman, "to pass you off for William's Howe."

They had not ridden many miles when our civilian, by the direction of Galmoy's cornet, observed the Irish army in the act of forming columns for march and attack. The colonel was in the centre, not perhaps more than a mile from the place where Hough had passed the night.

In riding towards the colonel he had an opportunity, by the assistance of O'Neile, of estimating the forces which were drawn out for the last desperate attack on the relieved city. There were there four regiments of Galmoy's disciplined Irish, the most terrible, but still the flower of James's army; large bodies of cavalry, of gentlemen volunteers; several strong parties drawn from various counties and even provinces; and the regiments already mentioned, particularly

obnoxious to the northern protestants, who hated and despised them. These were assembled under their respective chiefs, and made a more formidable array than Hough could transfer to his paper. A complete train of field artillery accompanied these troops, and to the eye of our Oxford demi, the whole had an air so imposing, that he thought nothing less than a miracle could save the garrison from destruction or capture. The Irishman all this time tried to read in Hough's face his impression of the scene. His countenance, however, expressed no anxiety, for, perhaps, on the event of the war, he had none. The officers of the royal army seemed to be surveying the aspect of the town with the purpose of renewing an immediate attack. Hough was lodged, without examination, in a place of security, as the last terrible conflict commenced.

Throughout the whole of the day the batteries of the besiegers continued to play, with only this little intermission about the hour of Hough's arrival.

But scarcely had the sun gone down, when flames were distinctly seen arising from the camp where Hough was a prisoner; and when the next day, the 1st of August, dawned, a line of smoking ruins marked the site lately occupied

by the huts of the besiegers. The citizens saw far off in the distance the long column of pikes, the varied arms and standards glittering beneath the first rays of sunrise, retreating up the left bank of the Foyle towards Strabane, according as it would appear to the calculations of young O'Brian Clare.

Thus ended this great siege, the most memorable, perhaps, in the annals of the British Isles. It had lasted one hundred and five days. The garrison had been reduced from about seven thousand effective men to about three thousand. The loss of the besiegers appears not to be easily ascertained; Walker estimated it at six thousand men.

At Strabane, news met the Celtic army, retreating from Londonderry, of the defeat of the royal army at Newton Butler, and of James's disappointments in the north of Ireland generally. The tents were therefore struck, the military stores flung by waggon loads into the waters of the Morne, and the dismayed Irish continued their retreat, leaving many sick and wounded to the mercy of the victorious protestants, into whose hands also the anomalous Hough fell, friendless and unknown to any. On the road to Strabane, the Irish cornet had unfortunately

plied Hough with whisky-punch at the earliest opportunity, squeezing into it the emblematical orange with significant energy, calling upon his comrades to drink confusion to the hooked nose. It is barely possible that Hough, ignorant of the effects of that potent beverage, drank to his own confusion. However this may be, O'Brian kept his engagement, but the officers to whom he so strongly recommended him, with Strickland, were ordered to join Sarsfield at Sligo, and could do no more for him.

The events connected with our story, in the autumn of 1689, incontrovertibly proved that the native Irish had, notwithstanding the faults inseparable from poverty, some splendid qualities, which have seldom been found in more prosperous communities. The inefficiency of the foot and of the dragoons was to be ascribed, according to all authorities on the subject, not to the Irish character, but to the Irish ministration of the period.

The evil tidings which terrified and bewildered poor James, broken down as he was by domestic griefs, of which his enemy was incapable, and against which he was adamant, stirred the whole population of the southern provinces, like the peal of a trumpet calling to victory. One last

chance was left, and if that chance failed, what remained? The rule of the Saxon coterie, and the supremacy of the heretic in the land. Avaux and the French officers generally, were amazed by the deathless energy which, in extremities so trying, the Irish as a nation displayed.

On the tenth of September the royal standard of James waved on the tower of Drogheda, and beneath were collected twenty thousand fighting men. Schomberg was at Dundalk, the distance between the two armies a day's march. The blood of the nation was up; Schomberg wisely declined to fight. James, emboldened by the caution of his adversary, imprudently appears at the head of the whole Irish army before the English lines, and unfurls his banner.

The autumnal rains of Ireland, and the poisonous provisions supplied to the English peasants, accustomed to domestic comforts, sickened them, and brought on pestilence with all its horrors in its train. The moans of the sick and the dying were drowned by the ribaldry and blasphemy of their comrades in misery. Poor Hough's sad eye and sickened ear were doomed to see and hear sights and sounds which filled his heart with loathsome horror. Here, seated on the body of a wretch who had died in

the morning, he beheld a miserable English rustic—destined himself to die before night—cursing in accents too familiar to the Oxford graduate's ears, singing obscene songs, and gulping down usquebaugh to the health of the devil. Even amid this scene might be seen sisters of charity and priests, but the enemy of mankind pre-occupied the souls whom they would save. The English peasant preferred Satan to the best of the ministers of mercy from another quarter. There, raved diabolical survivors, whose horrible grumbling mingled with oaths, because the corpses were taken from under them to be buried out of sight, assailed the ears of Hough. "Why," cried they, almost with their own last breath, "when there was such an abundant supply of such useful articles of furniture, were people to be exposed to the cold air, and forced to crouch on the cold ground?"

Many of the sick were sent on board a vessel to a hospital at Belfast; but scarcely half of them lived to the end of the journey.

Ships in the bay of Carrickfergus heaped with carcasses exhaled the stench of death without a living man on board.

The Irish prisoner suffered little, for his native bogs and quagmires had seasoned him, as well

as the swamps of Holland had prepared the Dutch.

From early dawn till dismal evening, Hough heard, with inexpressible anguish, the guns pealing over the graves of the English officers, till at length the funerals were too frequent to admit of military pomp. The mournful sounds were succeeded by a silence more melancholy still.

So masterly were old Schomberg's dispositions, that he faced, during several weeks, twenty thousand troops. In November the Irish went into winter quarters. Schomberg broke up his camp and retired to Ulster.

The two rival princes, during the interval, were busied in collecting their forces.

In the meantime our disconsolate friend Hough, depressed in mind and body by the wretchedness and hardships through which he was passing during the winter, though not a victim to the pestilence, was now reduced to a distressing malady which soon turned to fever, accompanied by intermitting delirium. On his first return to reason he found himself in a hospital in Belfast, which was then a small English settlement of about 300 houses. He could distinctly hear, in the ward allotted to him, the shouts of the multitude who pressed on

the carriage of William as he entered the stately castle, which was then the seat of the Earl of Chichester.

“God save the Protestant King!” rose as the voice of many waters from the Protestant people; of Catholics there were said not to have been more than one in fifteen. There were, however, monks and nuns within the walls. Hough could also hear the royal salute which was fired in honour of the Invader. Much did the youth suffer from the agony of suspense and fearful agitation. He was only conscious that he was well cared for and tenderly nursed. His religion, which at first appeared, by the emblems he had about him, to be popish, procured for him the severity due to popery; but on discovering a book of “Common Prayer” in his pocket, he was treated like an Englishman and a Christian. The fact is, however, that invalids of both religions and both sides were stowed away indiscriminately wherever a refuge could be found, and wherever charity might enter. He was in the stronghold of his own reformed faith—an Anglican, who scarcely ever pledged himself openly in Ireland to one party or the other—all he wanted to make him pass for any religion or any party was half-a-dozen different

wigs, and as many varying cloaks; as many different characters and names, with as many various interpretations of the New Testament.

Doubtless there are phases in the derangement of intellect which afford the sick man pleasure—the pageants which pass in gorgeous and varied phantasy before his deluded eye—the visible achievements of his own powers, his imagined promotion to sublime heights, or his elevation to a throne. Who is there that has passed through the fevered delirium of a terrible illness without some such visions of splendour and pomp? There would be perhaps little imagination at any time in many a man in health, whose mind, when in delirium, roves amid regions of fancy. At one moment, as the branch of a tree moved to the summer breeze, he saw on it clearly, as if on a wave, the Magdalen eight-oars, and the crew represented by so many leaves; at another moment, as another bough rose to view, from his bed through the window he beheld on it horsemen and chariots, or long lines of the army rising in varied succession. Nor do those who have suffered severe illness say that the hope of recovery is the sweetest pleasure of the sick-bed, nor the fear of death its worst calamity.

No one, however, we apprehend, would choose to be laid on a bed of sickness for the sake of such recreations as Mr. Hough occasionally enjoyed. To be an object of anxious concern during his lucid moments was pleasant ; but to Hough this pleasure, as we shall see, was mingled with pain. He suffered, however, more from the restless energy which longed for action than from his malady itself. He desired to complete the *Derriad*, and spent two hours in scanning spondees and dactyles, until the work grew into a handsome volume, illustrated by engravings of the scenes and actions which he commemorated, and the glowing descriptions recorded in beautiful type. In imagination he had already availed himself of the publisher's suggestions, to watch the direction of protestant, that is public opinion, and throw his whole energy into the current—to take the tide on the turn. Thus it happened, that he fancied his great work, was in a fair way to rival the *Iliad*.

Each ward contained about fifty beds, in which upon not very clean mattresses, William's soldiers pined and suffered. Many of his French Huguenots gave up the ghost. The nurses were for the most part Sisters of the order of Mercy. These, like all the Irish pertaining to the church,

were adherents of James, and were less anxious for the bodily health of the Irish patients, than for their spiritual welfare.

The English settlers and French protestants were under the impression that these ladies poisoned the soups which they administered to any but papist patients, and that they bewitched them with incantations. In each of these wards during the livelong night, was a single lamp, throwing but a dim melancholy light over the ghastly and often loathsome inmates. Day and night the holy sisters moved noiselessly about the wards, in their mournful dresses, crucifixes and rosaries suspended by their sides.

"There," cried a good hater of Catholic rites, "goes a priest of Baal, preceded by his bell-ringing urchins, and bearing what he calls the 'last sacrament' to some expiring papist, as deep in the gall of bitterness as himself."

The Irish Catholic to whom the priest was approaching, at this insult offered to his Redeemer, felt an anguish which bubbled through his frame. Was it the gush of anger, bursting from its depths against the scoffer, or was it holy indignation at the insult offered to his God? However this might be, the Oxford B.A. felt an ineffable horror at the profanation. Four blood-

lettings in the soles of the feet, within so many days, had done something towards calming down the fever that burnt in poor Hough's veins, but still enough remained to conjure up wild images around his couch. The gay pageant had given way to groups of grim distorted visages—pale, mournful figures. He thought the open space of the ward was filled with lovely sisters, offering from their yet white hands, glasses of blood to hosts of thirsty soldiers, who quaffed the human gore. From a vision such as this he awoke one night: his eyes were fixed upon the lamp which hung nearly over him. Lily Penderel's image recurred to him. "She is coming," says he to himself, "to rescue me from my unhappy fate."

In a bed behind him, an Irish soldier severely wounded and diseased, with a red counterpane thrown over his emaciated body, lay at the point of death. The priest, who seemed to glide rapidly from ward to ward, and from bed to bed, receiving the last confession of the dying sufferer, administered the Viaticum.

On Hough's left hand, close to him, an unhappy patient, frantic with fever, bound down upon his bed with straps, wrought and strove, till he burst all restraint, and in doing so, wrenched all the bandages from a terrible sword-gash in

his arm. The unrestrained fountain now sent up into the air a gush of blood from the opened wound. At this instant Hough, to his inexpressible horror, saw in reality his beloved Lily Penderel close to the maniac, yielding to his fancies, and soothing his terrible spirit. With great calmness she distinctly called aloud in a firm voice, "Father Warner, come to my assistance, come, and console this poor fellow." Mr. St. Aubyn sprang to her side, and laid his hand gently on the demented man's head, saying something to him in a soft, calm, and sweet tone of voice, which quelled the demon within. The poor patient sank into passive quietness; whether it was something in the look, the manner and words of the clergyman, or perhaps some deputed power from another world, or what is still more probable, the outward expression of an inward sanctity, or quality of the mind, to which the unhappy patient yielded, we know not; but this we can aver—that in a similar instance we ourselves have seen a sufferer, in the delirium of fever, and heard his fearful ravings against all he loved best on earth, when a venerable clergyman, his confessor, approached him with words of pity and of love, mingled with stern rebuke, and soon restored him to his right mind. Rea-

son, slowly at first, dawned once more over the darkened intellect ; the cloud was removed ; the spectres of deranged vision vanished before reality ; all persons and things began to resume their true aspect and character, until eventually the penitent's right mind regained its throne.

The wonderful change greatly affected the feelings of Hough, who had read much of sham miracles, priestcraft, and pious frauds. While revolving these things in his thoughts, and endeavouring to account for the priestly influence, suddenly a nun, with her pale face surrounded by a veil bent down till it approached his, said to him in soft and tender tones, "Dear stranger, you are thirsty," putting to his parched lips at the same time, a glass of cooling and refreshing liquid. He was revived—he looked her full in the face.

"Lily!" said he faintly.

"I am not Lily, but Martha," quietly replied the sister.

"Am I still out of my senses?" asked he ;
"Surely I well remember that sweet countenance, first seen at Hurley."

He raised himself slowly, and would have taken her by the hand, but she gently moved away, as if for some object.

“It was no deception this time, surely,” cried Hough, as she vanished out of his presence; “it was Lily Penderel.”

Soon the pale, calm face, bowed over him again, but not before the hospital bearers had carried away a corpse wrapped in its bed clothes, and the same holy man, who lulled the tempest of the sick penitent's mind, was by her side.

Then she whispered, “Sleep, young friend, and be at rest, at peace with God, yourself, and the world. God give thee joy and peace in believing. I am not that Lily whom you imagine. I am Martha—Sister Martha. Here is thy *Agnus Dei*, the heart's treasure which I gave thee. Here, too, is the crucifix.”

He involuntarily, almost intuitively placed the latter to his lips, and breathed a prayer.

“But what holy monk is this beside you, dear lady?” he asked.

“Our countryman, Mr. St. Aubyn,” she answered, gently smiling.

“Why, then, did you call him Father Warner, a little while ago?”

“But every thing and every one of whom I have any recollection are so changed! The roses have forsaken Miss Penderel's face, and the lovely locks which I too well remember, cluster-

ing down her neck, have disappeared. You, too, Mr. St. Aubyn, how changed you are! You assume a sacred character for which I am not prepared," said Hough.

"My explanation must be brief," answered the Father, "for duty calls me away. I am no other," he said, "than Sir John Warner, of Parham, in Suffolk. I, together with my dear wife, was given grace to embrace the Catholic faith in 1664, and in 1667, on the very same day, I entered the order of the Jesuits, and she that of the Poor Clares, at Gravelines. She is associated with some of the sisters, who have been tending the sick during these unhappy wars in Ireland. You may have seen her. I have not heard of her since the siege of Londonderry was raised.

"I became the Provincial of my order, and Rector of St. Omer, and afterwards confessor to James II., whom I did not immediately follow to St. Germain's, but with his permission remained in England, to strengthen and protect, so far as we could, the lambs of the scattered fold, and especially her whom I was entreated by her own parents to watch over and, if necessary, rescue out of Lord Lovelace's control. To effect my object I dressed in plain clothes, with

a feigned name. And here she is safe, betrothed to One from whom neither life nor death can separate her."

Imagine the atonishment, the mingled sensations, of sorrow and reverence on Hough's haggard countenance, when the chaplain revealed to him his own history and the destiny of his ward.

"Even now," continued the clergyman, "I am only on leave of absence from his Majesty, and must leave you for the present."

"Tell me, Oh! tell me Father," exclaimed Hough, "if I am thus to address you; where is Mr. Morton, and what is he doing? you were I know, much revered by that noble-minded gentleman. Is he involved in the miseries of these wretched strifes?"

"I have received a letter from him," said Father Warner, "which I will read to you; for it will tell you better than I can in any words of mine, what you wish to know."

"My very dear Father Warner, when my views and hopes were loftier in the estimation, at least, of the many, I sought, and not in vain I am told, those riches of the tongue which could fit me for the senate, and win the suffrages of statesmen. But the intrigues of party, and the petty jealousies of the men in power, have de-

tered me from political ambition. My theory of happiness changes with my position and my years. You know full well that once I supposed supreme felicity was only to be enjoyed on the great theatre of public business ; but when I saw my schoolfellow and college companion mounted on stilts to awe the vulgar, or stooping to servility to win their votes, I believed that retirement in my own secluded abode of Morton would best promote my true happiness. I am weary of what is technically called the world ; its pomps and vanities I hate. The last link that united me to it is broken. My youth and noon-day manhood, with all its charms and illusions—my brightest anticipations and golden hopes, my highest pride, my sublimest aspirations—are dead never to revive.

“The dear aunt of her whom I piously commit to your care was at once my solace, and the only object in life worth my labour and ambition. My journey so far through life has been a sleep ; I awake on the threshold of old age. But though the light which once illumined my glowing imagination is quenched in the grave of my wife ; the best and surest one, the noblest feeling of which our nature is capable, is not dead, the sacred feeling of friendship.

“Two friends, I hope, still remain to keep alive this hallowed flame, though I have not heard from either for months, in consequence of the interception of letters and the state of the post. With these two dear friends I would consult, respecting the manner in which I ought to employ the evening of my transient day that may yet await me. So long as James had any fair chance of maintaining his position, I adhered to his interests. The powers that be, are already vested in the person and parliament of William; to resist these established powers would, I fear, only promote civil war, and effect no practical object. The Georgics, next to the Scriptures of truth, are my study; and though I have heard much of the great and profitable improvements introduced by science into modern husbandry, I believe they are simply a development of Virgil's system. I love, my dear Father, to converse, like Isaac in the fields, with nature and with nature's God. I observe the growth of every plant in the garden or the field—of the forest or of the lowly vale. Flowers are the companions of my youth, of my advancing years; they breathe of Eden and they speak of Heaven.

“‘O fortunati, sua si bona norint agricolæ.’

But this reminds me of our dear young friend Hough, who has so foolishly fallen in love, because our dear Lily fell in the water. His flights are lofty indeed, but I fear he will soar too near the sun, and fall like Icarus. He speaks in his last letter to me of his projected *Ἄνδρες στρατιῶται* or “gentlemen of the army.” I never knew literature materially promote a man’s interest, unless displayed in political pamphlets. If Hough takes the winning side he will be a bishop before he arrives at the age of his uncle the President. I myself hope to live and die in the church of my baptism ; yet I should be grieved to find in any work of our young B.A.’s, the epithet “Romanist,” applied to that religion which Christendom calls Catholic, and which covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. There are, it seems to my mind, much insular anger and feeble hatred in such studied insults to the holy church, from which the reformed faith professes to derive her apostolical existence. I wish you could induce him to make no comment upon it and not to colour it ; and when he records the actions of men, to let the reader discover the motives of the actions.

“Tell him that Di Vine, who married his man Hubert, is already a widow. Conjugal love and

its sacred obligations she held cheap, in comparison with the claims of the passion which she retained for her former admirers, and particularly for my lord's gentleman of Lady Place. No sooner was Hubert restored to his office than the hounds recognised him, and the sportsmen rejoiced to see him in his place ; for his spirit was only equalled by his judgment in the field. His engagements, however, took him too frequently from his bride ; she soon became weary of Hubert's kind old grandmother, who treated her with doting affection, and had recourse to the gay company in the servants' hall of the great house.

“ Mr. Faircloth was not slow to improve his opportunity, and admitted her to the circle of the upper servants. She felt at home. As a token of Lord Lovelace's sense of her wise and conscientious conversion from Popery to the Gospel, he presented her with a purse containing one hundred pounds. The gift filled her with notions of unbounded extravagance ; she raved about all manner of expense ; indeed, she soon believed herself an heiress thrown away upon a clown. If she had not had the misfortune to meet him, she reminded him, she might have been married to a real gentleman. “ What

business," she asked Hubert, on his return from the field, "had he to marry her if he could not keep her like a lady?" While he was out amusing himself all day, and mounted on the best horse in Berkshire, she was pining away and wasting her freshness on a feeble old woman. "You have not even the decency to give your wife a pound for pin-money, and ask from her what no man ever yet asked of his wife," she used to say—besides, he was so unbearably vulgar and ugly too. "Look at Mr. Faircloth," she would say, "he knows what a lady is, and what she ought to have." Such was the language which welcomed Hubert to his grandmother's cottage, as he returned wet and weary after a hard day's run. At length his home became so intolerable to him that he betook himself to the consolations of the Royal Oak, drank deeply, and drowned his domestic griefs in oceans of beer, while Mistress Di Vine bestowed her favours on Mr. Faircloth. After a very respectable lapse of time, Di became a mother, and her child, just born into the world the wise woman pronounced a handsome likeness of Mr. Faircloth. The babe grew into a real crab-apple of discord, and anything but a mutual pledge of wedded love.

“ One fine morning last month, on returning from the kennel to his breakfast, the huntsman jostled up against Mr. Faircloth with the babe in his arms, before the fine gentleman could escape the outraged sportsman. The infant was his protection. Hubert smiled on the nurse and the nurseling, calling Di at the same time to relieve Master Faircloth of his charge. No sooner had the little thing been transferred to the arms of his mother, than Hubert lays his whip about the fine gentleman, inflicting on him such a chastisement as makes him cry out to Di for protection. She was coming to the rescue, when the huntsman brought home such a blow of the laden handle of the whip to Mr. Faircloth's powdered and adorned head, that not even his wig could save it. He fell senseless to the ground. Di screamed murder, until the servants rushed from the house to the cottage, when she fell into hysterics, and finally swooned. The old woman wrung her hands and urged Hubert to escape; she threw her arms round his neck and wept aloud. She blamed him not.

“ ‘ You and your child,’ she said, spurning the fainting woman with her foot, ‘ have brought us to shame and disgrace. You have brought

my grey hairs in sorrow to the grave, and blasted your husband's honest name and fame. Granddaughter of mine!! Let me curse her. She will be my boy's ruin—his death. Damn her! Take the jade away out of my sight.'

"Before she could do or say more her grandson was a prisoner. The unworthy victim of his resentment was bathed in his own blood, to all appearance a lifeless corpse, and became an object of sympathy and gossip at the great house; while the outraged sportsman found himself in a cell of an upper story in Reading Gaol.

"The old lady's greatest solace in her affliction for her grandson was leave to visit him in prison. This was granted to her on consideration of her great age and long holding under the family of Lovelace.

"It was at her departure from Lady Place one day for Reading Gaol that an under maid in the household put into her hand a rope, assuring her that if she could secretly convey it to Hubert, and see that he fastened it to one of the bars that secured the window of his cell, which was so high up that no escape from it was apprehended, he could easily make his escape.

"The poor young man, to whom the pure, free,

open air of Heaven was life and health, was now pining away miserably. The sounds of the country, the glimpse of the Thames through the grated window ; but above all things the sound of a bugle or the cry of a hound, awoke him to an agonising sense of his present degradation and wretchedness. So that whenever the old woman witnessed such paroxysms, she was resolved if it were possible, even at the risk of her own life, to liberate her “darling boy,” as she still called him. Only too gladly, therefore, did she avail herself of the contrivance of the rope, by whomsoever it might have been originally designed.

“Having given him the rope, and instructed him accordingly ; she told him to hide it till night, when the sleep of his keeper would favour his descent, and then to let himself down.

“There was one outside, however, who slept not, till she slept in death. She watched and waited till at length she saw, or rather heard Hubert forcing himself through the bars.

“No sooner had Hubert made all fast with the rope round his waist, than he ventured upon his descent. By the light of the moon, which was nearly at the full, the poor old woman with trembling emotion saw all that was left to her of

her family or kindred, dangling down, sometimes touching a projection of the wall and rebounding away from it. Hand passed under hand for some time, and notwithstanding his weakness, he safely lowered himself within a dozen yards of the ground; when the treacherous rope gave way towards the lower end—cracked, and parted. A dead, heavy, dull thud against the stone at the bottom assailed the woman's ears. She staggered, tottered, and reeled to the spot where her grandson fell. One dismal moan, and only one escaped the dying man—and all was over. The aged mother fell almost as lifeless at his side. Nor was it till the morning, that both were discovered by the gaoler, whose utmost endeavours, with such medical aid as could be procured at the moment, barely restored the poor woman sufficiently to life and reason to make before a magistrate a deposition, without which the circumstances of the case could not have been known.

“Faircloth was shrewdly suspected of originating the stratagem of the rope, if not supplying it. Some said it would have done its duty better round his neck. But ‘*De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*’”

Before he could read another word of Mr.

Morton's letter to the poor invalid, whom it but too deeply affected, the reverend man was summoned to perform his duties to the dying and to the dead.

CHAPTER XLVII.

As to the value of conversions, God alone can judge, God alone can know how wide are the steps which the soul has to take before it can approach to a community with Him, to the dwelling of the Perfect, or to the intercourse and friendship of higher natures.—*Goethe*.

WILLIAM pushed forward from place to place, and still the Irish receded before him, till the morning of Monday, the 30th of June; his army marching in three columns, reached the summit of a rising ground near the southern frontier of the county of Louth. Beneath lay a valley of woodlands, meadows, and fields of clover, crimsoned with blossom. Through this fertile vale flowed the bright and beautiful Boyne, the boundary between Louth and Meath. On the Meath side of this tranquil stream there rises with a gentle swell, covered with grass, flowers, and foliage, an eminence surmounted by a tuft of ash trees, which overshades a ruined church and lonely graveyard. The pavilion of James, near this church, crowned the hill of Down. The flags of the Stuarts and the Bourbons, waved on

the walls of Drogheda. The south bank of the Boyne was animated by the camp, and studded by the batteries of the hostile army. Thousands of armed men were moving about among the tents; and every one, either on foot or on horseback, French or Irish, had a white badge in his hat.

Scarcely one Protestant nation was unrepresented in the army, which a strange series of events had brought to fight for the Protestant religion in the remotest island in the West. Among others, there were Hastings' foot, who had on the disastrous day of Killcrankie, maintained the military reputation of the Saxon race.

It was early in the day. The Prince of Orange rode slowly along the northern bank of the river, and closely examined the position of the Irish, from whom he was sometimes only separated by two hundred feet. He was accompanied by Schomberg, Ormond, Sidney, Solmes, Prince George of Hesse, Konigsburgh, and others.

"Their camp is but small," said one of the Dutch officers. "They may be stronger than they look," said William; "but weak or strong, I will soon know all about them." He alighted, sate down on the grass to rest himself, and called

for breakfast. The canteens were opened, and a table-cloth spread on the grass (the place is marked by an obelisk, raised during the lives of those who witnessed the event which it commemorates). While William was thus enjoying his early repast, a group of horsemen approached close to the water on the opposite shore: among them, his attendants could discern those who had been conspicuous at reviews in Hyde Park, and at balls in the gallery of Whitehall. The youthful Berwick, the fair-haired Lauzun, of whom we have seen so much, and others about the Court; such as the Stricklands and Clares. There was Tyrconnel, once admired by maids of honour, as the model of manly vigour and beauty, but now bent down by years and political labours, yet overtopping all the rest. The chiefs in the Irish army, it is said, soon discovered the Prince of Orange, breakfasting amid the splendid circle on the opposite bank. Scarcely had William risen from his meal to the saddle, when he was made the mark of two guns. The first shot struck one of the holsters of Prince George of Hesse, and brought his horse to the ground. "Ah!" cried William, "the poor prince is killed." As the words passed his lips he was himself hit by a second ball—a six-pounder. It

merely tore his coat, and grazed his shoulder, and drew some blood. Both armies saw that the ball had taken effect, for the Prince of Orange sank down on his horse's neck. There is another version of this story, which says, that when the Irish gunner cried out, "I have him now, as dead as Julius Cæsar," King James, at the last moment, ordered him not to aim at the Prince. However the case may be, it seems more natural to the character of James, to save rather than in cool blood to take the life of his nephew and son-in-law. William's gallant deportment soon reassured his friends. "There is no harm done," he said; "but the bullet came near enough." A cannonade was kept up on both sides until the evening. "All is right," said William, of the English regiments; "they stand fire well." Everything was put in readiness for forcing a passage across the river on the morrow. Every soldier was to put a green bough in his hat. The baggage and great-coats were to be left under a guard. The word was "Westminster!"

The sun rose bright and cloudless on the First of July. Soon after four in the morning both armies were in motion. James anticipated the design of William, who sent his right wing to

march to the bridge of Slane, and thence so as to turn the left flank of the Irish army. It was near ten o'clock when William put himself at the head of his left wing, which was composed exclusively of cavalry, and prepared to pass the river not far above Drogheda. The centre of his army, which consisted almost exclusively of foot, was entrusted to the command of Schomberg, and was marshalled opposite to Oldbridge. At Oldbridge the whole Irish infantry had been collected. The Meath bank bristled with pikes and bayonets. A fortification had been made by French engineers out of the hedges and buildings, and a breastwork had been thrown up close to the water side. Tyrconnel was there, and under him was Richard Hamilton and Antrim.

Schomberg gave the word. Solmes' Blues were the first to move. They marched gallantly, with drums beating, to the brink of the Boyne. Then the drums stopped, and the men ten abreast, descended into the water. Next plunged Londonderry and Enniskillen. A little to the left of Londonderry men and the Enniskilleners, Caillemot crossed at the head of a long line of French refugees; the main body of the English infantry struggled through the river, up to their arm-pits in water. Still further

down the stream, the Danes found another ford. In a few moments the Boyne was alive with muskets and green boughs. It was not till the assailants had reached the middle of the channel that they saw more than half the army. A wild shout of defiance rose from the whole shore ; during one moment the event seemed doubtful, but the Protestants pressed resolutely forward ; in another moment the whole Irish line gave way. Tyrconnel's personal courage was greater than his military skill. His attainment in his profession was not equal to his age ; the energy of his mind and body was broken. Several of his best officers fell, while vainly endeavouring to make their soldiers look the Dutch Blues in the face. Richard Hamilton led a body of foot into the depth of the channel, to fall on the French refugees, accompanied by several courageous gentlemen. He advanced sword in hand into the river. But neither his example, nor his orders, could infuse his own courage into the mob whom he commanded. Indeed, according to some French officers, on whom Macaulay seems to rely, whole regiments of the Irish flung away arms and colours, and scampered off to the hills without striking a blow, or firing a shot ; yet, even before the day was closed

they proved that this reproach was unjust. Richard Hamilton put himself at the head of the cavalry, and under his command they made a gallant though an unsuccessful attempt to retrieve the day. They maintained a desperate fight in the bed of the river with Solmes' Blues. They drove the Dutch brigade back into the stream. They made the Huguenot regiments give way. Caillemot, while encouraging his fellow exiles, received a mortal wound in the thigh. As his men carried him across the ford to his tent, he urged forward the rear ranks, who were still up to the breast in water: "On, on, my lads; to glory, to glory!"

At this emergency, without defensive armour, Schomberg rode through the river, and rallied the refugees, whom the fall of Caillemot had dismayed. "Come on," he cried in French, pointing to the Popish squadrons; "come on, gentlemen, there are your persecutors." Those were his last words. A band of Irish horsemen attacked him; when they retired, he lay a corpse on the ground. During near half an hour the battle continued to rage along the southern shore of the river. All was smoke, dust, and din. Just at this conjuncture, William came up with the left wing: the tide was running

fast. His charger had been forced to swim and had almost been lost in the mud. As soon as the Prince was on firm ground, he took his sword in his left hand, for his right arm was stiff with his wound and his bandages ; and led his men into the hottest of the fight. His arrival decided the fate of the battle.

On this memorable day William was to be seen wherever the peril was greatest : one ball struck the cap of his pistol ; another carried off the heel of his jack boot. His troops, animated by his example, gained ground fast. The Irish cavalry made their last stand at a house called Plottin Castle, about a mile and a half south of the bridge. There O'Brian Clare performed prodigies of valour ; repelled the Enniskilleners, who lost fifty men in the engagement, and whom he hotly pursued, till William himself rallied them and turned the chase back, in spite of the efforts of Clare who fought like a lion, and of other officers in this encounter. Richard Hamilton, who had done all which valour could perform, was himself severely wounded and taken prisoner, and instantly brought through all the blood and carnage before the Prince.

“ Is this business over ? ” said the Prince ;
“ or will your horse make more fight ? ”

“On my honour, Sir,” answered Hamilton, “I believe they will.”

“Your honour,” muttered William, “your honour!” That half suppressed exclamation was the only revenge William took for his undertaking a task beyond his power: to win Tyrconnel to the Orange interest, even had he been sincere.

Early in the morning William had ordered his right wing under the command of Meinhart Schomberg, one of the Duke's sons, to march to the bridge of Slane, some miles up the river, to cross there, and to turn the left flank of the Irish army. Meinhart Schomberg was assisted by Portland and Douglas.

The quick eye of Captain Strickland, anticipating the design of the enemy, apprised the king of the important movement. James accordingly sent to the bridge a regiment of dragoons commanded by Sir Phelim O'Neile; our young hero and other officers accompanied him, and acquitted themselves as brave gentlemen; but the great Irish commander, before our hero could ward off the blow, received a mortal wound, and fell. Strickland was sensible of the difference in the discipline of the Irish cavalry and the men he had been accustomed to command. Even the Highlanders were steadier than the Irish whom it was now his

lot to rally. He contrasted their conduct unfavourably with the outposts of William's regular army.

Posted at the long and narrow bridge of Slane, over which the enemy must necessarily advance to the attack, but no longer commanded by their brave national commander, the Irish were panic struck, divided and disheartened; and entertaining the idea that they were posted on a desperate service, meditated a retreat to the main body. This would in the present disposition of William's men, have been utter ruin; for on the defence or loss of the pass, the fortune of the day was most likely to depend. If once the troops under Meinhardt Schomberg were allowed to pass the river, the Irish were altogether unlikely to withstand the shock of the regular troops.

Men under arms, and in a position of trust and of peril, are quick in appreciating the merit of their officers. Strickland's personal prowess and intelligence inspired the men with confidence, and they for a moment rallied round him, but they wanted the magic of the Irish command, and lost heart under the Saxon. Strickland did all that a brave soldier could achieve to keep his men together, but they

crowded themselves in a confused mass or fled. With loud cheers he again and again, sword in hand, rallied and re-formed them.

Scandalised at such conduct, Strickland advanced to the head of his men, and cried, "On, on, boys! now's your time. Here old Ireland must be lost or saved. Let any one who loves his country and his faith follow me." The fire was continued with the utmost vehemence on both sides, and the issue of the action seemed dubious. Strickland, mounted on a superb black charger, might be discovered on the top of the north bank of the river, urging, entreating, and commanding, but in vain. The sight of the glittering files of the English foot, supported by the Scotch guards under James Douglas, and the long succession of troops which were destined to support the attack, struck the Irish with consternation. The outlet from the bridge, with all its defences, were in complete possession of the enemy, young Schomberg and his followers. The fire of the defenders of the bridge began to slacken. Strickland and his immediate associates fought hand in hand in the very front of their men, but those behind the leaders began to fly—first singly, then in parties. The passage being now open, the

enemy poured over. "There is yet time," cried Strickland, "to bring our horse to attack them before they can get into order." Ere he could speak his errand, or utter his orders, he was saluted by tumultuous exclamations which resounded from the hostile ranks. In the meantime the forces of the Prince of Orange crossed the bridge, and securing the desired position, formed in line of battle. The English right wing now threatened the rear of James's army. The routed Irish army, destitute of their leader, though led on by as brave a Briton as ever drew a sword, became panic-struck, and scampered away pell-mell. The rush of the horses at full speed, the shaking of the earth under their feet, the glancing of the swords, the waving of the plumes and pennons, and the shouts of the Highlanders were too much for the broken spirits and imperfect discipline of the Irish. Still the voice of Strickland was heard, even above the din of conflict and flight, again exclaiming to his soldiers, "On, on! Think on Sir Phelim O'Neile! Avenge him, and be men!" While thus busied he found himself surrounded by his enemies, almost single-handed. The English right wing were ready to go into the rear of the royal army, and he thought all was

over, when up comes the Honourable O'Brian on his dashing Faugh-a-ballah to his rescue. He had been posted four miles south of the Boyne, near a place called Duleck. He had with him but a single detachment, but there were not, perhaps, in both armies two such horsemen as O'Brian Clare and Robert Strickland. Faugh-a-ballah fought with the sagacity of a warrior; Strickland's steed was as active as a deer. Both men threw themselves and such of their followers as they could inspire with courage between the royal army and the Orange troops. Thus they fought their way to a narrow part of the Dublin road, where two cars could not pass each other, and where on each side of the road lay a morass, which afforded no firm footing.

"Now we are safe," cried Clare, in good Irish; "Erin-go-Bragh! Ireland for ever! now for it, your sows!"

But scarcely had the men taken their position, when several of the pursuers, coming up to them, went down floundering and plunging in the marshes on each side. At length a young English officer, with a party of Englishmen, leaped the morass between them, and had well-nigh overpowered Strickland, but short was the

struggle, for the assailant was raw and inexperienced, though his attendants were steady yet impetuous.

In his own defence, Strickland's unerring aim was directed against the young officer; O'Brian gently put aside, as if he were at mere play, the thrusts of his assailants. "Quarter, quarter!" at the same moment burst from the lips of young Tate, the foremost officer of the enemy. The quarter was allowed, and Tate recognized by both young men. But while engaged in this humane task of showing mercy, the main body of the right wing was upon the two youths.

"Here they are," cried both, when they had spared Tate. "Ah! my gay boys," said they, turning to those about them, "you must conquer or be cut to pieces; for look, here come Meinhardt Schomberg's whole forces."

"Bad cess to them," cried an Irishman; and, not being aware of what had passed between Tate and Strickland, plunged his sword into the heart of the former. The two young officers mourned for their poor friend, but the moment was charged with the destiny of both armies, and left them no time for sorrow.

Disturbed by the fear that the English troops would achieve precisely what they had now per-

formed, Lauzun, the French general, marched early in the day, with his countrymen and with Sarsfield's horse, in the direction of Slane bridge. It was from this body, a little apart from the rest and out of the line of the charge of the cavalry of either side, that Clare had advanced to aid Captain Strickland; while one general scene of confused slaughter, flight and pursuit lay behind them. Strickland and O'Brian co-operating now with Lauzun, sustained their position nobly, and defended the rear of the army of James.

While Strickland thus distinguished himself at Slane and joined Lauzun, the heat of the battle was over. Hamilton was mistaken in thinking his horse would continue the fight; whole troops had been cut to pieces. It was enough that these gallant fellows had disputed the field till they were left without support, or hope, or guidance beyond that which our hero and his immediate followers could at the risk of their lives afford.

The interests of our tale do not require us to dwell minutely on the merits or demerits of the rival princes, or make any invidious comparison between them. "It is certain," says Macaulay, as if reluctantly admitting the testi-

mony of Pepys' Diary, "that in his youth, James was generally believed to possess, not merely that average measure of fortitude which qualifies a soldier to go through a campaign without disgrace" but that high and serene intrepidity which is the virtue of great commanders. It is equally certain, that in his later years he repeatedly, at conjunctures such as have often inspired timorous and delicate women with heroic courage, showed a pusillanimous anxiety about his personal safety. Of the most powerful motives which can induce human beings to encounter peril none were wanting to him on the day of the Boyne. He had in his own opinion sacred rights to maintain, and cruel wrongs to revenge.

"He was a king, come to fight for three kingdoms. He was a father, come to fight for the birthright of his child. He was a zealous Roman Catholic, come to fight in the holiest of crusades."

He saw from the heights of Downe his rival, weak, sickly, wounded, swimming the river, struggling through the mud, leading the charge, stopping the flight, grasping the sword with the left hand, managing the bridle with a bandaged arm. He was seized with an appre-

hension that his flight might be intercepted, and galloped towards Dublin. According to Miss Strickland, the decay of king James's senses was from a failure of his physical powers, which had, as before noticed, been brought too early into action.

“Edward, the Black Prince,” she reminds us, “John of Gaunt, Henry IV., and Henry VII., all died in a pitiable state of mental atrophy, prematurely worn out; the victims of their precocious exertions.” In addition to this cause, James had been heavily visited with a burden of sorrow, such as few in any rank have been able to bear. Slandered, betrayed, blackened, driven from his throne into exile, poverty and contempt, by the daughter whom he fondly cherished and tenderly loved. His body weighed down his spirit, and destroyed his energy. The very vastness of the prize which he had at stake, under such circumstances, and above all his affection for his queen conspired with his miserable malady to make him careful of his own person, on whose life and liberty so much, so very much depended. It has, perhaps, been well said, that James pursued a course worthy of the best days of Gregory and Innocent. His trial was to have been born to reign over Pro-

testant England. To stop the religious tide with untrimmed sails under Catholic colours was more than he could achieve. He sank beneath the storm which he had himself excited. Had he stooped to steer his vessel on the proper tack he might have made a point or two at least, but trusting the fury of the troubled waters, however closely he might be near to the Lavinian shores, he had but manufactured a cable of sand to hold his good ship to the anchor of Rome. His reliance on the strength of the Lion, unaided by the over-mastering cunning of the serpent, broke under him, and he went down.

• James was escorted by a body guard, under the command of Sarsfield, who had on that day no great opportunity of displaying his courage and skill, which even his enemies allowed him to possess.

The French auxiliaries, with whom Strickland so ably co-operated, and among whom Clare distinguished himself, had been employed the whole morning in keeping William's right wing in check, and in covering the flight of the retreating army.

Of the last forty hours, William had passed thirty-five on horseback. He was incapable of further bodily or mental exertion, and seems,

therefore, to have desisted from the pursuit, which Schomberg might have taken up. But he was no more.

Months passed away before Hough's full consciousness returned after a relapse, which followed the scene by his bed-side, which we have described; but his eyes partly recognised, as they unclosed, the fair countenance of sister Martha, who constantly flitted by him, and ministered to his, and indeed to the wants of all the other patients under her care. In his imagination, she was an angel of light; in her presence his visions were Elysium, where his fancy revelled, amid the sunny glades of Berkshire, along the flowery banks of sunny streams;—under the shadow of the Giant's Causeway it lingered. He had, indeed, during the continuance of this dream, been in an ecstasy, save when fears of its termination, like serpents raising their heads above the flowers of Eden, kissed and stung him, as he reposed on such bliss. The kindness of charity, and the deep solicitude of grateful friendship, such as Lily bestowed upon him, were in his estimation nothing compared with the trembling anxieties of human love.

As soon as his strength admitted of the change, he had been removed, through the

assistance of Father Warner, to a room suited to his condition and sphere of life. The sister's thoughts were disturbed by his delusion, for he still indulged the fond hope, which she had never nurtured. He mistook her deathless charity for what the world calls love. Kneeling beside his couch, she often watched with deep emotion the changes of his features, praying fervently that while his life was yet spared he might be reconciled to what she believed to be the true and only Church. One day, as she thus watched and prayed, bending over him, he suddenly awoke, and seeing her in that attitude, with her eyes intently fixed upon him, his feelings gushed forth in such words as he had strength to whisper. He declared she was his life ;—even to be near her in sickness was Heaven. He adored her. In reply, she said, The only proof of his love she required, was, that he should be united with her in faith ; that he should abandon the hope which must pierce him with sorrow, for she never, never could be his ;—she was already given away. He faintly reiterated his usual charges against Popery ; especially the worship of a creature, which robbed the Creator of His glory. She tenderly replied,

“ When I left England we could not have anti-

cipated the wonderful and improbable circumstances, which have since brought us together. To my own mind, it appears evident, that God's providences towards you are all combining to bring you to the knowledge of the truth and the faith, as it was delivered to the saints. You have been taught to look upon our veneration for the spotless Mother of God as sinful : then, my dear Henry, for thus I will address you, on such a subject, what must be your sin, in approaching me with language, which, if addressed to the Blessed Virgin, would, in your own estimation, be idolatry ? To adore a sinful woman and to enshrine her in your heart, as an idol, surely cannot be less sinful than to pray for the intercession of her whom all nations have called and will forever call 'Blessed.'"

Apprehending that the bare mention of his unfortunate passion for her might instantly be the death of the hopes which he had nourished too often and too long, he ventured no further to disclose the sentiments which he could not but entertain. Like many who have never been agitated by violent passion, Hough had hitherto taken a very common view of the world, because when in the academic shades of Oxford, or the rural retreats of his vacations, the distant sur-

face of society seemed to him smooth and tranquil, he believed that the reality was equally serene ; but now even Lily seemed to him indifferent to his feelings and desires ; yet her voice flowed with mysterious music to his ears, and awakened, or rather created, a thousand echoes of delight in the depths of his soul. The nature of her sympathy was not that for which he pined. Her nature knew the way to his heart, but she touched the chord only which she wished to tune for Heaven.

Sir John Warner, the Jesuit, often dropped in to see him as if by accident, and made such appeals to the patient's piety, judgment, and knowledge, that they were difficult to resist. In one word, the reverend father was a Jesuit, and smiled and prayed rather than argued our young friend into submission to—what the Jesuit called emphatically the Church. He dwelt on the mighty claims which she asserted, and justified them by the exceeding great and precious promises of Scripture. He spoke of her prospect from the upper room in Jerusalem, and her retrospect of 1800 years, from the heights of her glory and martyrdom. He urged the necessity of a centre of union in the 'Rock against which the storms and gates of hell could not

prevail. He reposed on that infallibility which her Infallible Head promised her. He felt at home in a living, speaking, supreme Church—not, as he said, on the mere tradition of the fathers, differently interpreted by different parties. The Ever-living Lord was in his temple really and truly, and dwelt within the breast of every Catholic. “But after all,” added he, “it is only God’s grace shining into the darkness of the heart and filling it with humility, with light, with faith, and with love, that can bring us to the foot of the cross.”

Such out of a thousand were a few of the inducements which the Jesuit brought forward to influence poor Hongh, who yielded to their power. At the same time he could not but object to the order of the Jesuits.

“He believed,” he said, “they had their peculiar and necessary province. You Jesuits have a face for all occasions, and pardon me, Father, when I say that your society has earned a character for wordly wisdom, and the cunning of the serpent. Men say, you take advantage of human prejudices and circumstances, to promote the interests of the Church, at the sacrifice of the feelings, or even the property of the individual devotee.”

“But,” replied Sir John, “the spiritual necessities of the many are greater and more important than the temporal advantages of the few.”

Hough's youth and seclusion and aspirations for honours at Oxford cut him off from all sources of knowledge but books. But books could not teach him the use of books. He was almost a stranger to that living library called the world, and guided by his religious convictions only, without the help of the world, he forsook the Church of his baptism, and died a rank papist. “After all,” says one who saw his MS., “there is not much to admire in his uninteresting and unsettled character.” Quite true; and so possibly Lily first thought. Hough was certainly handsome—nay, beautiful; but his countenance calls up in the observer no sense of decision or power. His noble, snow-white brow, shaded by dark curls, his large, piercing eye, his cheek now pale and hollowed by illness, his mouth a credit to the graces, — his whole expression, was composed by calm intellect. Harmony breathed from his face. There was nothing difficult to decipher in his features. No one could hate him; no one could fear him. How far his character and his countenance were

influenced by the atmosphere in which he moved we know not.

Opportunity, necessity, or position is the door which opens to himself and to others a man's character. None perhaps can tell what he would become in any given untried circumstance. It may indeed, if carefully observed, be some very minute particular or accident that will evoke the true character and reveal its true features. Hough surely experienced this in his own case. But for his extraordinary meeting with Lily Penderel, and all which it entailed, he might have passed through life a staid, calm, learned demi, and died a good Protestant, or probably a fellow of St. Mary Magdalen College, if not a bishop. How many of us are deterred from the inquiries and investigations which might possibly realise our worst fears and rob us of the consolations of ignorance!!

For a long time Hough, with an infinite dread of evil, like that which drives the patient to put off the operation that is to save his life, deferred his conversion, which the Jesuit taught him to believe would save his soul.

In every great emergency which called him into action we have seen him equal to the occasion. It was what he wished to appear to

Lily Penderel, that moulded his thoughts. His ambition to be loved, the desire to win her affections; all his enterprises since his acquaintance with Miss Penderel, were nursed in the cradle of his first and only love. The first beam from her bright eye lighted up dazzling hopes and bright desires, and if his projected works, his *Heroics on Londonderry* and the "Gentlemen of the Army" had seen the light, they would perhaps have excelled all which recorded the exploits of William III. in the London gazettes of the time. Such as "Story's Impartial History," and the plays which ridiculed James in the theatres of London. His greatest error, and to which he owed his saddest sorrows was, that he made love his business—his only, or his chief object. In all else he was aimless and therefore undecided, while in the life of Strickland the same passion was only an episode, and in the life of Clare a mere romance, of which he himself was not the hero.

As the symptoms of death warned Hough's affectionate nurse of his approaching dissolution, she evinced that deep attachment to him, which in his health she either suppressed or banished from her heart. As his lingering spirit hovered on the confines of another world, she repeatedly

put the crucifix to his lips, which he as often devoutly embraced. "How is it, Sister Martha," asked an elder Sister one day, who at that time seemed to require her assistance elsewhere, "that while the faintest prospect of life remained in your patient you were careful and cumbered about many things, and charitably concerned for many other sufferers; now your devotion to this young man is undivided?"

"I owe him my life," she said, "and I would repay the debt, now that the dark curtains of the grave are so soon to fold him from my sight, in showing him the sure way to eternal life. I love with an intense love all which I now see in him, over which time and the grave can have no power!"

Tears as she said this, gushed freely from the deep fountain, which had long been sealed. Were they tears of spiritual joy or natural sorrow?

The happiness of Heaven, which she anticipated for herself, seemed more delightful, since in the communion of Saints, she could there meet her brother. The dying man, had made his general confession, and was according to the rites of the Roman Church prepared for his last end. Doubtless, sorrow had seized upon the maiden's soul, but it was not the sorrow of the world.

Hough was speechless, but still seemed conscious of her presence ; his cold damp hand was pressed in hers ; his eyes rested on her, and beamed with calm joy ; he seemed almost to smile. He gazed on her gifts, which lay on his pillow, and then was lost in mental prayer. Life was ebbing fast ; she listened, but at last could hardly say, whether the soul had left its house of clay. The confessor knelt by the bedside, and in the recommendation of the soul just departing, devoutly offered up the Litany, while the young sorrowing nun made the Latin response, calling on the saints to pray for her dying friend, and beseeching the Lord to deliver him : “ O Lord ! open to him the gates of Life. Introduce him into Thy Heavenly paradise : make him rejoice with Thy Saints, that he may live with Thee in the bonds of eternal love, and may be inseparably united to the Saints and to Thee.” No sooner had the priest finished these last words of the last prayer for the departing than the immortal spirit fled to the world beyond doubt and uncertainty.

The young Sister of Mercy, though familiar of late with scenes of suffering and death in their most loathsome abodes and revolting forms, had scarcely ever been actually present at the separa-

tion of soul and body ; she looked now upon her dead brother with natural awe. Our first acquaintance with a corpse is life's most awful reality. There is something in human nature, when we find ourselves in company with the dead, which shrinks from the spectacle and the touch. Lily Penderel felt that the frail body was nothing to her, now that the ruins were deserted by the spirit which lighted up the earthly tenement. Still, the mortal and the immortal were mysteriously associated. She lingered near the fallen abode of an inmate who was so dear to her heart. She regarded the tenement on account of the tenant who had flitted. The body must go down into the dull, cold earth. Yet she pressed the dead man's marble forehead with her lips, and loved his remains. When she felt in her heart, that according to her creed that body had been the temple of her dear Lord, she revered it for His sake,—what though that Tabernacle had not been altogether hallowed and full of light ; the Divine residence had expelled the demons, and shone the more mercifully in the region of darkness, till the contrite penitent's soul had been illumined by the light of Life.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

I leave myself, my friends, and all for love.—*Shakespeare.*

ON the ninth day after the battle of the Boyne James arrived in France, and recalled Father Warner to his duties in that country.

In spite of all the hallowed influences which regulated Sister Martha's conduct and ruled her destiny, the hidden depths of natural sorrow were broken up, and Lily Penderel's woman's heart in her solitude wept; but as she wept, she prayed over the Irish grave of Henry Hough. It may be that she loved him whom she mourned only less than she loved his Father and her Father, to whom she recommended his spirit. But hers was that chaste friendship which imparts improvement to the head and the heart; hers was a lively image of the blessed friendship which reigns in heaven.

Morning by morning, as the pink tint of the East mantled over the face of the sky and evoked

the sweet song of the lark in the heavens, and as the deep note of the blackbird came mellowed from the neighbouring grove amid the tranquil stillness of the scene, the lonely Lily mingled her sacrifice of prayer and her intercession for the dead, with the fragrant incense which the wild flowers breathed around his grave.

So long as her pious attentions could avail the wounded, the sick, and the dying in the hospitals and dwellings of Belfast, she devoted herself to their care; and as long as she remained, her recreation after the toils of the day, and her sympathy with the living, was to make her retreat to the little country church-yard and hold communion with the dead.

At such moments she enjoyed the calm and elevating converse of all things around her in silence or in harmony. The musical murmur of that perpetual song of the brook which babbles of Eternity was to her a Vesper. The deep silence which reigned over the abodes of the dead as evening closed round them stole over her soul. She saw nought but the memorials of mortality. She was herself buried to the world and heard it not but as the sounding sea-surge breaking upon the far off shore.

The claims of human suffering upon her

charity and her care had already materially exhausted her physical strength and immediate resources, ample as both had been. She made up her mind to quit Ireland for ever, but not without many affectionate regrets and religious recollections. She placed a plain wooden cross at the head of poor Hough's grave, and had inscribed beneath it simply his name, date of his death, and the words "Requiescat in pace." She scattered a few flowers with which her tears mingled over the green turf which covered him, and turned her thoughts to other scenes. She made a long pilgrimage on foot on her way to the sea, where she embarked for France.

She piously addressed herself to the guardian angels of the different parishes through which she passed, and besought the intercession of each saint to whom the parish church was dedicated. Of all the Irish saints, whom she had made choice of for patrons St. Patrick in her devotions held the first place.

Towards the autumn of 1690 she was a professed nun, in community with the poor Clares at Gravelines, associated with Lady Warner, who had, with the concurrence of her husband, whom we have chiefly known by the name of St. Aubyn, taken the veil.

In the meantime Strickland, in Ireland, continued to fight the King's battles, in the ardent hope of recovering the losses which the Irish army had sustained, nor was he altogether deceived in his brightening anticipations.

On the 27th August the Irish stood resolutely to their arms in the siege of Limerick, under the command of Sarsfield. At no period of the war, had Strickland such a glorious opportunity to distinguish himself for valour and address. The English grenadiers were driven with great loss into the counterscarp; but it was in the fierce fight, when no restraining order of James, and no fear of exceeding the commands of Sarsfield could keep his ardour down, that Captain Strickland with his own single arm and by his own manly voice, achieved such glory as covered him with the praise and admiration of the Irish. Never, perhaps, did Celt and Saxon fight side by side, in one and the same cause, so cordially, so fiercely and so effectively. Under him Paddy stood unquailing and dauntless, and unmoved under the very hottest fire, and flung stones when other ammunition failed. Indeed, the struggle was long and desperate. The very women of Limerick mingled in the combat, and fought like tigresses robbed of their whelps. In

the fiercest moment of the terrible conflict, between the Roman Catholic Celts and the English Protestants, a mine exploded and hurled a German battalion into the air. At length the Prince of Orange determined to raise the siege. Suffice it here to say that the history of the first siege of Limerick, bears a remarkable analogy to the siege of Londonderry. The southern like the northern city was the last asylum of a church and nation.

As Londonderry had been the refuge of English Protestants, so Limerick was the stronghold of Irish Catholics. In both cases, religious and patriotic enthusiasm did, what veteran warriors had pronounced it absurd to attempt.

Letters from Yorkshire brought news to Limerick of a rising in the north of England, in favour of James, under his Colonels and Captains; and so promising were the symptoms, according to the information of the Honourable Clare, who signalised himself in forming a company which he commanded, that Strickland thought he could not better promote the royal cause than by joining the newly raised loyal English regiment. But just as he was preparing for the journey, the report reached him, that Crone, the bearer of important dispatches from St. Germain's,

while swallowing bumpers to the health of King James, babbling about thousands of honest men in arms, the French fleet and the restoration, at a public tavern table in Gracechurch Street, had been taken and carried to the office of the Secretary of State, and placed at the mercy of the new Government. While Crone was waiting his trial, another agent of the Court of St. Germain named Tempest was also seized on the road between Dover and London, and found to be the bearer of numerous letters addressed to the malcontents in England. So unequal to the success of a plot were the Jacobites. Such were the reports which made Captain Strickland hesitate on the Irish side of the Channel. While he still was deliberating and consulting with Sarsfield on the step he had contemplated; a second letter from Clare, whose first flow of youthful enthusiasm and hope was giving way to the subsequent reports, which began to open his eyes to the real state of affairs, declared upon the best authority that Oates had become founder of a school.

His success proved to others that no romance was too wild or too diabolical to be received with faith and reverence; his understanding, by fear and hatred was disordered. His slanders were

monstrous, but they were well-timed. He had raised himself from the lowest depths of pilfering poverty, by lying, which murdered some of the most noble gentlemen of his day. He was adored by admiring crowds; he held at his mercy the estates and the lives of the Howards, the Herberts, and other great men. He was admitted to the honours of the palace and the law-courts. A crowd of imitators was rising up in England. Popish plots were the only manufacture that paid, and during the period of Clare's duty in the north, the supply of the article was only less than the demand, in England.

While Sir Edward Hales, the friend of Strickland (in whose company we opened our story), and other Roman Catholics were committed to prison as traitors, and were pining away their lives, because, to be in communion with the Church of Rome, was then high treason: and poor old Peterborough, the trusty friend of James, who negociated his marriage with Mary of Modena, was sent tottering on crutches, and wrapped up in woollen stuffs, to the Tower, the Salamanca Doctor (Oates), whom nothing but the blood and treasures of those who never injured him could satisfy, was sniffing in the

scent of carnage and gloating over the butchery in which he could no longer take an active part; showing his brazen brow and loathsome person in the House of Commons, where he was welcomed by a liberal senate. "Ah Laard! Ah Laard!" once more awoke the reviving echoes of the lobbies and the gallery.

At the same time the Earl of Stamford, who had been deeply concerned in the plots formed by his party against the Stuarts, was chairman in what was called the "murder committee," to inquire who were answerable for the deaths of Russell, Algernon Sidney, and other Whigs.

"In this state of affairs," observes Macaulay in his "History of England," "all Jacobite commodities, however well designed or cleverly executed, are a dead loss. Any intrigue elaborated at St. Germain must be a mere drug in the market at head-quarters, or something worse."

Such were the penalties inflicted on the Jacobites in England, which neither the vehemence and opposition of the Whigs in Parliament, nor the subsequent victory of the French off Beachy Head, nor the alarming panic which followed could mitigate, or afford them any well-grounded hope of success. Strickland, therefore, with

the concurrence of Sarsfield, desisted from his purpose to join the forces of James in England. Indeed, so long as he could serve the good cause, he greatly preferred Ireland as the battle-field, for the same reason that Clare obtained permission to draw his sword in England. The colonists of Ireland were not identical with Strickland's countrymen; with the Saxon Williamites in England Clare had no sympathy. Both young men were reluctant to fight hand to hand against the troops with whom they once served—to be opposed to the general whose commands they formerly obeyed, and for whom they had once felt so much respect. And yet, under the most favourable circumstances, their respective posts in the civil wars might expose them to this trial.

From October, 1690, till May, 1691, no military operation on a large scale was attempted in Ireland. Various were the successes of William's forces till the fourteenth day of August, the day of Tyrconnel's death. On this very day Ginkell encamped on the same ground which William had occupied twelve months before. The batteries on which were planted guns and bombs, played day and night; and soon roofs were blazing and walls crashing in every

corner of the city ; whole streets were reduced to ashes. Meanwhile several English ships came up the Shannon and anchored about a mile below the city. Still the place held out. The Dutch general's plan was to separate the infantry within the ramparts from the cavalry without ; and this plan he executed with great skill, vigour and success. The reputation of the Irish horse at the Boyne had been purchased by the destruction of the best regiments. The cavalry, overcome by numbers, fled now into the city, or drove before them as many cattle as they could collect at the moment, retiring to the hills. The camp was abandoned. Seven hundred of the Irish held out against a much larger force, and for some time defended the garrison. It was eventually agreed there should be a cessation of arms, not only by land but in the ports and bays of Munster. The signing of the treaty was deferred till the Lords Justices, who represented William at Dublin, should arrive at Ginkell's quarters. The outposts of the two armies chatted and messed together. The camp and the town mutually enjoyed free intercourse.

“ Has not this campaign,” asked Sarsfield, of some English officers, with whom he was dining, “ raised your opinion of Irish soldiers ? ”

“To tell you the truth,” answered one of them, “we think much of them, as we always did; change kings with us, and we will willingly try our luck with you again.”

“Or,” cried Strickland, “let King James be himself again, or give him the heart to rally his own subjects and my countrymen, and we will fight the battles over again.” Before this repartee could advance to anything more serious, Mr. Plowden, member for the ancient city of Bannow (which has for many years past been covered with the encroaching sea, and partly buried in the sands), and chief minister of finance in the Dublin Parliament of James II., desired an interview with Sarsfield. He was admitted without ceremony to the company, and soon produced a commission under the great seal of James. The commission had appointed him, at the death of the Lord Lieutenant Tyrconnel, to be the first of the Lords Justices, for the conduct of civil affairs. No sooner had Mr. Plowden settled his business with the general than he joined the party.

The name was so familiar and dear to our hero, that he could not be indifferent to the noble gentleman who bore it. He was no other than a regular Saxon, and first cousin to the father

of his beloved Mary. The deep interest which Captain Strickland evinced in the family, soon won the confidence of the Commissioner. He talked freely to the young officer, told him how he had superintended the Irish finances so long as there were any to superintend. "And," said he, "from all that I can learn from my relations at St. Germain, the exchequer at that Court is almost as much exhausted."

"How then," said Strickland, "can his Majesty keep up his military establishment, and his guards at the palace?"

"In the course of what the queen calls the 'desolating reform,'" answered Mr. Plowden, "the regiments are terribly reduced. Many of the king's adherents of noble birth, especially the soldiers of the late brave Dundee, already feel themselves a burden upon the king. The most noble of them contemplate a petition to his Majesty for leave to form themselves into a company of private sentinels: others think of forming themselves into brigades for Louis in Spain and Germany. What we are to do, God only knows," continued Mr. Plowden, "for our estates will be confiscated and our services unrewarded."

Strickland was startled at this intelligence; for he had long indulged the hope of attaching

himself to the Court at St. Germain. Even Sarsfield openly declared that he must seek his fortune in the service of France. Before anything satisfactory could be discussed, Plowden was summoned to join his colleagues.

Selfish, indeed, and full of egotism must that heart be that cannot lend its sympathy to such sorrowful regrets as but too plainly found their way to the countenance of Strickland. He needed more philosophy or practice than he possessed to conceal his intense anxiety at tidings which persuaded him that the reverses of James must still separate him from her for whom he would gladly serve twice seven years.

Indeed, to disguise the countenance which the Creator moulded—to teach it to belie the feelings to which it was intended to bear record—to simulate a sentiment we feel not, or even to dissimulate our thoughts, according to the estimate of Strickland, is the accomplishment of the Father of Lies.

He averted his face, for he had felt that it had been too eloquently ingenuous. Sarsfield, who had watched his countenance from the first, read its meaning with a feeling of generous inquiry. He had still much in his power; and on their quitting their companions, our young hero in-

formed him of much that had passed between himself and the fair girl whom he desired to see at St. Germain's.

On the third day subsequent to the meeting we have described the capitulations after the second siege of Limerick, were legally signed. By the military treaty, it was agreed, that such officers and soldiers in the Irish army, as should declare that they wished to go to France, should be conveyed thither ;—in point of fact, Sarsfield considered that the troops who remained with him as under an irrevocable obligation to go abroad. He had made up his mind, though sorrowfully, to abandon Ireland. “*Nos dulcia linquimus arva,*” cried he, “No more shall we hear the Celtic song in the island of music.” So that after all, stern necessity and the decision of war, left no alternative for Strickland but to retire to St. Germain's, and thus under the force of circumstances, to take the very step to which his heart inclined. And Strickland cheerfully and gratefully complied with the terms and suggestions of his commander. Never did Celt sympathise more affectionately with Saxon than Sarsfield with Robert Strickland.

“I shall never forget the noble gallantry of your behaviour, and your co-operation with me

to the last," said Sarsfield, while conducting him some way on his road.

"We are on the road to Cork," said Strickland.

"You are to go on to Kinsale," replied Sarsfield, "and will be escorted by these troops," pointing to a company placed at Strickland's command. "There a ship awaits you. We may again meet ere long. In every country you will find Irish Catholic soldiers of great ability; scattered over all Europe will be found brave Irish generals; yes, and clever diplomatists, exiled from their own land by invading colonists and unwarrantable aggressors, supported by England. For my own part, I anticipate a French expedition against England, and shall only be yielding to my own natural impulse to have a blow at the oppressors of my country and religion; but such honourable exceptions as you are I would give my life to defend. Whatever be my ultimate destination, I shall take the command of the thousand of my brave countrymen now assembling in Normandy."

A friendly pressure of the hands, and the brave Irish general and his Saxon captain parted. It was just as Sarsfield said. A ship waited for Captain Strickland, with the trunks,

baggage, and all the belongings of his rank. The ship before a good north-west gale went roaring through the waves, sending out a rippling track to mark her course. The city and the port which he had hailed for the first time two years ago soon faded in the distance. The green hills of the south coast of Erin melted finally into the bright, beautiful, blue sky of autumn, and Strickland was wafted for ever from the land of his first regular campaign, and the Green Island of the Faith.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Oh happy you ! who blest with present Bliss,
See not with fatal prescience future Tears,
Nor the dear moment of Enjoyment miss
Through gloomy Discontent, or sullen Fears
Foreboding many a storm for coming years.

Mr. Tighe.

It was a delightful evening towards the close of autumn, that, avoiding as much as possible the faubourgs of Paris, Captain Strickland, having left his horse behind him, hastened eagerly on foot, refreshed by the clear and salubrious air of the country, and enjoying its extensive and rural prospect in a winding ascent through woods and dales which terminated in a noble terrace looking down on the valley of the Seine. The trees and bushes and flowering shrubs grouped around in romantic variety of shade and contrast were gently fanned by the evening breeze. The calm influence of the season reigned around. The fancy rather than the ear drank in the sweet low song of the river softened into unison with the sweet stillness of the scene. The path

along which our traveller hastened with impatient stride wound through or around clumps of trees of great age and size. Orchards now laden with bright, rich, mellow fruits, invited him to taste of unforbidden apples. The towers, turrets and spires of Paris were gilded in the glorious glowing sun, and the waters near him were fringed with evergreens, like mirrors of gold framed in emeralds.

Amid this sublime seclusion, the nearest object which indicated the approach to human habitations was a dog; huge, venerable, and serene. He was pacing up and down like a sentinel, at the foot of a path which led up to a mound surrounded with ancient yew trees, and almost enveloped in gloom. He had not advanced many steps further, when the dog majestically marched, with the air of one on accustomed duty, across the path where it first diverged from the avenue into the steep and solemn retreat. He growled, showed his teeth, and put himself in an attitude to arrest the progress of the aggressor. No sooner, however, had Strickland pronounced the word "Lion," than the grave old dog couched at his feet: a mutual recognition between the sagacious animal and the friend of his former master soon ex-

plained all. Caressing and fawning upon him, the dog preceded him to a turn in the deeply-shaded path, which revealed to the traveller's eye, in deep contrast to the sylvan horror which pervaded the place, a sort of rocky alcove that glimmered white as marble in the dim and melancholy light which struggled through the dense foliage, screening it from the influence of the weather. What in Papist countries is called a Calvary—that is the figure of the Saviour on the Cross, amid the awful scene of the Crucifixion—was before him. The three Maries at the foot of the cross were in the present instance mournfully grouped round the head of the dying Christ a crown of thorns seemed to torture the still living brow. Lion having led the way to the precincts of the sacred scene, retreated to his post; where he had evidently been taught to watch. As the visitor's eyes glanced towards the awful representation, a beautiful effect of light and shade was produced on the statues of the Blessed Virgin standing at the feet, and the other two pious women at the sides, by the evening sunbeams trembling upon their white figures; the crucifix remained deep in the shadow of the recess. On looking closer still, Strickland perceived in front of the cross some living figure,

kneeling in an attitude of pensive supplication. It was Mary Plowden, lost in devotion. Her long golden ringlets fell upon her snowy bosom and pure white dress with an air of careless grace, surpassing in beauty the most studied attitude; she looked almost one of the group so naturally clustered together. At no time, not even when glittering in the splendour of the court, did Robert think her so lovely. A painter, thought he, might have adorned his canvass with no unworthy portraiture, had he seen the fair devotee, now in the first bloom of womanhood, thus realising to her vision the scene of the world's redemption. He gazed entranced on her, thus prostrate, whose image had dwelt in his heart ever since he had parted from her nearly three years ago; but never did, even his imagination, pourtray her in such beauty of holiness. Oh! reader, if woman's loveliness have charms in fairy bowers, in brilliant halls, and gay saloons; in the moments of exciting emotion and passionate pleasure; how incomparably more so, in that calm hour when all earthly passion is banished by the memorials of Him whose name is Love. When all interests, all wishes and desires, hopes and fears are merged in heavenly contemplation—when the eye of

faith looks from the outward and visible emblem to the unseen—the High and Holy One—the real object of her adoration. Under such circumstances, Robert Strickland saw his beloved Mary unconscious of his presence, but audibly breathing his name in her prayer for his protection and eternal joy. He dared scarcely disturb her; he looked and listened with breathless attention. He gratefully felt that though nature's feelings were not actually conquered they were at least subdued. When he looked at the beautiful and pious being before him, he thought of an union which death could not sever.

After a few moments she arose from her devotions: the subject of her prayers, the dear object of her heart stood before her. One exclamation of delighted surprise burst from her lips. Robert hastened towards her, forgetful of all but her presence, and she, now descending from the height, unmindful of all, but the blissful emotions of mutual, fondly-treasured affection, fell into the arms of him who was now dearer to her than a brother.

It was a moment of pure unmixed delight, and but a moment, yet long and tenderly in after years did memory bring back to these two hearts the ecstasy of that meeting. The retiring de-

licacy of woman's feeling was wont to pervade her every action, and inclined her, though gently, to withdraw from her lover's embrace; and yet she was the first to speak.

"It was not here," she said, "that I thought again to meet you. The sudden surprise is more than I was prepared for," she added, resuming her dignified composure.

"Ah! why should my sister—my loved one, who has so sweetly betrayed herself to the heart who lives for her and loves her: why does she not dispel every fear, and express the fullness of her joy? Why are not our hearts devoted to each other as they have been—gladdened by unreserved communion and unclouded bliss?"

"You know not, dearest, you can never know all that I have suffered since I heard you had only been liberated from prison to join Sarsfield at La Hogue. I had scarcely a gleam of hope that we should so soon meet again. The anxiety which I have experienced, while seeking to know what happy spot on earth was favoured with your presence is removed; I am happy—too happy: such joy on earth cannot last. The king himself gave no satisfactory account of your delay in Ireland. I feared I was doomed to

die without once more hearing the loved voice familiar to my childhood. And yet, now that I behold you, now that we are at last restored to each other," said Strickland, "why are you not what you always were?—my confiding Mary,—my sister,—my guardian angel. Why do you not tell me all?—Is not the ecstatic moment come,—is not the union of our hearts, our hands, our very beings, arrived? By the unchanging love I have borne you so long—by the memory of our past—by the ineffable emotion which yon hallowed images have witnessed, we must not part again, nor enter the palace, till I am reassured by these dear lips that the affection so pure, so true, so mutual, so fondly cherished by us both is still entirely our own and only ours. Tell me, Mary, that I am yours and you are mine."

"Calm yourself," said the gentle being, whose agitation demanded soothing now not less than her impetuous lover's; "calm yourself. Be composed, and I will tell you all. I know I have been the companion of your childhood."

"Yes," he added, "and you are my destined bride. It is not possible," he went on, "that one happier than your Robert is to become the partner of your joys and sorrows."

Mary smiled through her tears and said, as she fondly looked up into his face,

“ Delay, delay is all I require. You shall judge whether I am not, even without the desire of my parents, acting aright, when I tell you at once that our present marriage is impossible. I know your heart too well to suppose you can really believe that any other has usurped your place in my affections; no, our mutual and plighted loves exclude for another every feeling which exceeds the bounds of friendship.”

Strickland pressed her to his heart, now relieved of its doubts. To confirm his happiness, she declared that the queen now sanctioned the alliance, but wished it deferred till a brighter day.

“ But let us go,” said Mary, “ into the château, and present ourselves together. Little can the queen guess what is detaining me in my pilgrimage.”

They had not advanced many steps in that direction when old Lion, trotting far before, wagged his tail, and gave evident signs of his recognition of an acquaintance. In a second, the animal had the skirts of Clare's undress military frock coat in his mouth, pulling him along towards the reunited and happy Robert and Mary.

“Faith! sure it’s himself that’s come. Upon my sacred word of honour, here he is clean and clever; and by the same token it’s herself that’s on his arm.”

It may well be believed with what joy these two brother officers exchanged greetings, whose chances of meeting again so soon, if ever, had been so painfully against them. But what changes had passed over them and theirs since leaving Whitehall! To all three the meeting called up pleasant memories associated with England. Wonderfully had the two youths grown into weather-beaten and hardy manhood. How still more perceptibly had the fair girl bloomed into the perfection of the woman, like the rosebud opening into the full blown but early rose.

The Irishman first found utterance.

“By St. Denis and all the Saints of St. Germain, St. Germain himself, and all the rest of the holy men and holy women,” cried the ecstatic young man, “Bob, I thought you were dead or lost, and here you are as large as life, and as romantic as ever.”

Robert hesitated, uncertain how to reply in such a way as might arrest the current of questions which he expected at a moment when he

had something else to say than to answer them. He had no need, however, for any reply.

“I wish,” said Clare, without a pause, “I had been allowed to remain with you to finish the Irish campaign, for our Court here is growing into a regular monastery, and you know I have no vocation for the life of a monk. The devil a lie I’m telling you; if you don’t believe me, ask the brilliant Anthony Hamilton? He’s the boy for a spree. By the same token, he threatens to show us all up in his proposed sketch of ‘Royal Life’ at St. Germain. It’s true for him, our life here beats all entirely. Upon my sacred word it does. Nothing more, Bob, nor less than one round of prayers, penances, religious exercises, and nocturnal devotions. There’s not an hour’s peace you’ll have while you are in the place, though ’t isn’t myself, a Celtic Catholic, that ought to say it, unless you lead the life of a hermit. Upon my sacred honour, if it had not been for the delightful society of this agreeable young lady,” he added, looking at Miss Plowden, until she slightly blushed, “I could not have endured this monastic palace so long.”

Strickland for a moment felt uneasy, but Mary’s look as well as O’Brian’s candour assured him that he had nothing to fear. In the course

of conversation the amiable girl freely and playfully admitted that the harmless gaiety and youthful sallies of the Irish soldier were the very life, if not the light, of the solemn pomp of St. Germain's—that she had herself been often cheered by his conversation, especially when he talked to her about her absent lover.

“A whole army of huntsmen and fowlers, stag-hounds, all jealous with you, Lion; are they not?” he asked the noble animal by his side. “Harriers, packs for the boar and packs for the wolf; gerfalcons for the heron, and haggards for the wild duck; and, by the Lord Harry! all to little purpose; for we are too good, or too dull for field sports. Some of those English heretics are always asking me to take them to a hunting mass. But though there were at least a dozen masses here every morning last season, tatter the rag of a hunting-coat was seen in either of the chapels.”

Having relieved his thoughts of such weighty matters, he launched out without further preface at once into various schemes of pleasure for the precarious days of the two young officers' residence at St. Germain's. These joyous suggestions, however, were only destined to occupy the time which brought the party to the grand

entrance of the foreign palace of the royal exiles.

The first sounds which greeted our party as they were passing to the royal presence fully confirmed the remarks of their gay conductor, O'Brian.

“Hark to the Royal Preacher,” cried he; “if hearing is believing, now judge for yourselves.”

Strickland recognised the accents of James, reading: “L’Angleterre elle-même, avant qu’un schisme infortuné en eût fait un royaume de trouble et d’erreur, se distingua par sa pitié envers Marie: ses rois la regardèrent comme la protectrice de leurs états: ses plus saints évêques furent le défenseurs les plus zélés de son culte; c’est un dépôt sacré qu’ils avaient reçu de ces hommes apostoliques qui, sous les ordres du grand pontife S. Gregoire, vinrent établir dans cette île célèbre, la foi de Jesus-Christ sur les ruines de l’idolatrie. La science qui distingua bientôt cette église florissante, loin de refroidir son zèle envers Marie, le rendit plus fervent et plus solennel; sa pitié augmenta avec ses lumières: l’orgueil et les passions seul on détruit ce qu’une foi humble et éclairée avait d’abord édifié. Cette sainte semence

que la bonté de Dieu laisse encore au milieu de ces villes rebelles, fructifiera en son temps."

This prophetic strain was only broken by the announcement of Captain Strickland.

The delight which filled the grateful hearts of Robert and Mary was increased by the generous congratulations of the queen and her friends ; all painful doubts were soon removed from the minds of the now happy lovers by her majesty. The king himself consented to the long desired union, but at the same time declared that it would be cruel to join them together in holy matrimony at a moment when the trumpet-call to battle might so soon summon the soldier from his bride.

" To part from a lover, I know by experience," said the monarch, " is less painful, than to leave one's wedded wife."

After the first friendly welcome of the king and queen, Strickland began to feel at home in the palace. There were the Stricklands in great force. The old cavalier knight banneret, Sir Thomas Strickland, whose lady was sub-governess to the little prince ; also their sons were present. There were also a host of Robert's cousins and connexions. There, too, might be seen Sir Roger Strickland, the late vice-admiral

of England. In the royal household was the faithful Robert Strickland, the queen's vice-chamberlain, still in attendance, the same whom we saw at the Coronation of their Majesties ; he was brother to our hero's father, who died when Robert was but an infant.

Among the families who had left houses and lands for the sake of a king who had no home of his own, young Strickland recognised the little Middletons, the Staffords and many others ; but more particularly, the little sisters of his own Mary, whom he looked upon as his own, besides several Protestant adherents of their majesties. The children, like one numerous young family of brothers and sisters, were playing in the parterres in good fellowship, or were in little groups ; some drawn up in rank and file in military array, others waiting the word of command.

Which ever way young Strickland turned he saw familiar faces.

The whole town of St. Germain's was filled with Scotch, beside some of whom he had fought at Killiecrankie, also of English and Irish Jacobites, who were already falling into a state of utter destitution. As for Mrs. Plowden, she welcomed her darling Robert as if he were her own son ; but complained to him that as his

Majesty the King had spoiled her youngest children, so the Queen, by her indulgence, had nearly spoiled Mary.

Weeks flew by like moments with Strickland and the dear girl of his early, only choice ; for a little while, “ the course of true love ” did run smooth. Their happy hours of mutual intercourse were only now and then disturbed by the loud stunning, but yet distant note of the preparation for a projected invasion of England. It had already been resolved that a camp should be formed on the coast of Normandy, round the basin of La Hogue, and that in this camp all Irish regiments that were in the French service should be assembled there, under the command of their brave countryman Sarsfield. With them were to be joined ten thousand French troops. A noble fleet was to convey this force to the shores of England, to restore James to his dominions ; but as Clare observed to Strickland, it was far easier to keep than to recover a throne.

Than the brave Sarsfield there was no general under whom Strickland would sooner fight. He had, however, but half a heart to fight against his countrymen ; and, through Mary Plowden, expressed his painful reluctance, even in the

Royal cause to shed the blood of Englishmen. Mary Beatrice highly applauded the young soldier's feelings, and under the sanction of King James, recommended an interview with Madame Maintenon, who could obtain a commission from Louis. There was a terrible coalition, her Majesty said, of which the Prince of Orange was the head, all combined against France, and she was certain that Captain Strickland's services would be most acceptable to Louis in Spain. In the course of a week, it so happened that Madame Maintenon, the bosom counsellor and confidential friend of Louis XIV. called on the queen. She was attired if not in all the splendour of an acknowledged queen, certainly in such robes as none but the wife of a King of France was allowed to assume—she wore the ermined mantle and was adorned with the fleur-de-lys.

While Mary Beatrice, Mary Plowden, and Strickland were deliberating on the best way of introducing the subject to the mighty favourite, the grande dame had to be kept waiting a few minutes ; but the Queen of England so gracefully apologised for the delay, by expressing her regret, that she had lost so much of her conversation, that the grand lady was not only appeased but gratified.

Small court gossip, and a critique on the young prince's royal attire, occupied some little time. Nor was it till the queen had patiently learnt from the supreme judge of French fashion, that purple velvet and ermine were not the proper costume for the royal boy—the future king of Great Britain—that Strickland was introduced. His courtly manners, elegant person, unaffected gallantry, and quiet wit; but above all the knowledge of the state of Europe and the political relations of France which he evinced, at once won her admiration and esteem, and earned her interest on his behalf with Louis, which she permitted him to expect.

Restrained and hedged around in that magic circle of Court ceremony, which sustains the dignity of royalty against the vulgar aggression of the world, Madame and the queen spoke with the most profound deference, of Louis, and with scarcely less respect, of James. They talked over the affairs of the French Court, and dwelt with mutual pleasure on the cordial friendship existing between the two potentates, their relative interests and united forces, and soon gracefully began to speak more naturally, and with less of the splendid formality of French etiquette, than Strickland had ventured to anticipate, gliding

into his views and prospects without effort or apparent design.

After this gracious visit and interesting conversation of Madame Maintenon, an interval of political intrigue in which she bore a considerable part, but which concerns not our story, passed away.

The two delighted lovers enjoyed the present without fear or regret. Their glad life wore all the fresh beauty of promise. Autumn darkened into winter, and winter brightened into spring ere the influences which swayed the destinies of Europe clouded their happiness, and once more divided them.

Already had one hundred and fifty officers, all of honourable birth, feeling themselves a burden on the king which he could not bear, formed themselves into a company of private sentinels. Among these was Captain Ogilvie, who fought bravely at the battle of the Boyne, where he witnessed the prowess and valour of young Strickland in the field, and soon after the action made his acquaintance. While our hero was on the point of joining this devoted band of loyal gentlemen—who afterwards distinguished themselves, to the great admiration of the French army, in Spain and Germany—he was sum-

moned to the august presence of the Grand Monarch.

“I am resolved,” said the mighty king, “to take the field immediately in person against the allies, before they can bring all their vast number of forces against us. Their name is Legion ; but they are unwilling to go into the deep, bloody conflict, and are still lingering and unready. Our adversaries are indeed a mighty multitude ; but France is a match for the rest of Europe.”

“*Nec pluribus impar*,” rejoined the accomplished captain, with his usual tact, and with a profound reverence and expression which showed the haughty sovereign that the young Englishman was neither ignorant of the motto nor of the ambition of le Grand Monarque.

“To-morrow I set out at the head of the aristocracy of France, and from what Madame Maintenon tells me of your services and conduct in Ireland, as well as your faithfulness to King James, I infer that you are not unworthy of admission to the gallant and glorious train of nobles—the flower of France, whom I have the happiness in person to command. Hold yourself in readiness, sir, to join us early to-morrow morning.”

The young officer with an address beyond his

years, thanked Louis most gracefully, for the distinguished honour his Great Majesty had conferred upon him, but at the same time modestly blushed, hesitated, and was attempting to ask some further favour, when the gallant monarch, anticipating his meaning, said, in the tone of a question, “you want a few more days at St. Germain with your fond, fair friend in the Court of Queen Mary of Modena?”

“Even so, may it please your august Majesty,” answered Strickland; “a few short days of peaceful intercourse, and mutual confidence, before we part, perhaps, for ever.”

The lofty monarch shook his head and his ambrosial locks, as did the fabled god, and sternly denied the request which he himself had divined, then watched the countenance of the petitioner. After an awful pause his mighty majesty condescended to a smile, and smiling said, “You may bring *la belle Anglaise*, under your own escort, in the pomp of our noble company. She will not have the command of a troop, nor indeed be required to fight; so be not alarmed. She will not be singular, for a group of high-born ladies will precede her. We only reserve the right to extend our orders to her as well as to the rest of our ladies, so as to

direct the movements of both according to our royal will and pleasure and the best arrangements for their entertainment."

Nothing could exceed the astonishment and delight with which Miss Plowden listened to her privileged lover's account of the magnificent project of Louis and of her admission to the gay assembly and to a place in the brilliant progress.

It was not, however, before she had obtained the queen's acquiescence and advice to join the crowd of high-born and charming women in the royal pageant, that the young lady, escorted by her lover, departed from St. Germain for the gorgeous display of martial pomp and female beauty.

O'Brian Clare accompanied them part of the way, congratulating Strickland on his good fortunes.

"May you return from the achievements of your talent and sword covered with the laurels of France, and may you back out of the royal presence as easily as you entered it at first. For my own part I shall have more to do with war than love, and leave the royal monastery this very day for less brilliant service than yours. God be with you, and farewell, my dear Miss

Plowden ; for I know not when we three shall meet again."

"Farewell!" cried Robert. "Go where glory leads you, my dear Clare. Pray for me, and I will pray for you, until we meet again." And the interests of truth induce us to admit that Robert Strickland was not sorry to find that his friend O'Brian Clare was leaving St. Germain's as well as himself. They parted; Clare to the immediate service of James, Strickland to the expedition under Louis—but first of all to assist in the grand prelude.

The sun had scarcely attained his splendour of full day when Robert and Mary were mingling with the grand and gay assemblage to which, the preceding day they had been so very graciously invited.

The princesses of the blood, each attended by a group of noble damsels, among whom Miss Plowden soon found herself quite social, accompanied the king. The charms of so many young and beautiful women, we may easily believe, inspired a brilliant throng of high-spirited gentlemen with such courage as in earlier times of chivalry encouraged the champions in the tournament.

Among the musketeers of the royal household,

rode for the first time, a youth of seventeen, who afterwards succeeded to the title of St. Simon, to whom generations owe a vivid picture of a France which has long passed away. There, too, was the tuneful Racine, who has been called the "French Virgil" who mingled in the glittering throng, to witness the great events which it became his office to record.

In the neighbourhood of Mons, Louis entertained the ladies with the most gorgeous review that had ever been seen in modern Europe; and if anything could reconcile Mary Plowden to the temporary absence of her beloved Robert, it was the high place which he held near the person of the king, who appeared at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand of the finest troops in the world, now drawn up in a line eight miles long.

From early morning to the close of the long summer day the brilliant spectacle displayed its dazzling splendours.

Deafened, bewildered, and tired to death, as with rapid eye he glanced along the ranks, Racine, who had frequently enjoyed Miss Plowden's conversation, and admired her sentiments, whispered into her ear, "Would to Heaven that all these poor fellows were in their cottages again

with their wives and little ones!" Such were the last words of Racine as he left the ground.

At the same instant, a letter securely folded was placed in Strickland's hand. He looked round, but before he could recognize the bearer of the packet or demand the name of his employer, the mysterious messenger had disappeared in the throng, and the only glimpse of his retiring figure which Strickland could catch left a vague impression that it was Ben Brown, who had, since the king's last return to St. Germain, fully established himself in the town of St. Germain, to be near the royal family; but, if possible, to be nearer still, to his sweetheart, Kate Coleman. He was equal to any emergency there, by sea or by land, and was highly valued for his honesty not less than his intrepidity; but as he was attached to the sea forces off La Hogue, which were to act in concert with the army which O'Brian Clare had gone to join, his appearance was most unaccountable, and yet Strickland could not be mistaken, for he had never forgotten honest Ben, since his conversation with him at Faversham.

The incident roused our hero's curiosity. But,

before he could open the packet, the whole assemblage of ladies, attended by a gallant escort of the nobility of France, were already in motion, and marshalled in order of procession on their return from the review, so that the newly-appointed officer in the staff of Louis had only time to restore his loved one to her proper place in the company, when the king's orders severed them, perhaps for ever.

The word was given. The officers resumed their posts.

Immediately after this superb pageant, Louis announced his intention of attacking Namur. It was not till he saw all his comrades of the expedition making their respective preparations for the march, and each absorbed in his own affairs, that Strickland found an opportunity to open the note so unceremoniously thrust into his hand.

Divesting it of its legal technicalities, it was to this effect :—

“For the hands of the honoured Capt. Robert Strickland.

“Dear Sir,—My knowledge of your intimacy with Col. Plowden and of his affairs, not less than my concern for your own interests, induces

me to address these lines to you, where I know they will find you.

“ I have written several letters in re Plowden and in re Aston to Colonel Plowden, but I suppose they never came to hand, as I have had no acknowledgment. The last time I wrote to him, the Colonel was with King James at La Hogue, making preparations for the battle.

“ These presents, then, are to let you know, if possible before you leave St. Germain, that although Cheat-the-Gallows has defrauded the hangman and robbed his clients, evading the penalty of the law by jumping overboard into the sea, just as he was in the hands of justice, and, though Maysfiend is fearfully involved in the alleged crime of guiding the hand of a dead client to execute a will in favour of said Maysfiend, yet they completed the work which their master had given them to do before they were called to their account—the one to his great assize and the other to take his trial in an inferior Court.

“ Through their ‘ deeds of darkness,’ under the sanction of the law against Roman Catholics, Plowden is already forfeited to the crown. The other estates, particularly Aston-in-the-Wolds,

are in danger of the same fate. I am advised by my agents in London, that the several estates of your relations in the North of England are secured against the grasp of the invader. Sizergh Castle is duly conveyed to two domestic servants or tenants—Messrs. Shepherd and Carne. The manor of Thornton Briggs is not as yet, I fear, transferred to any safe keeping. Neville Towers and Strickland-on-the-Lakes, to which I am informed you are the direct heir, are transferred and duly made over to one Benjamin Brown, the future husband of Katherine Coleman, both, I apprehend, in the service of the royal household, and now or lately resident at St. Germain in France.

“My chief apprehension is, that the legal facility to retain the property thus made over, granted to the purchaser, may be too great a temptation. To establish his title would be only to any Protestant too easy, and thus he might ruin the proscribed Jacobite proprietor whom he was expected to serve. Brown, however, has the reputation of an honest Protestant loyalist, whose father fought under James when Duke of York. You ought by all means to have his address, particularly as his receipt of the deed, which according to Squire Strickland's instruc-

tions through his London lawyers we forwarded to Mr. B. Brown, has not come to hand. Many letters and parcels, suspected of Catholic interests, have been strangely intercepted or have miscarried. We are therefore anxious for an acknowledgment of the aforesaid instrument.

“ The deed itself which, as per letter of advice, we examined, under which the estates are conveyed to Mr. Brown, and the mere nominal sum for which he has purchased that valuable property, may admit of great question, if the vouchers fall into the hands of a hostile or interested party.

“ The firm of Maysfiend & Co. had some time ago a sort of roving commission from the new government hacks, to report any Roman Catholic who continued to practise in the Law courts. The London agent employed by Squire Strickland's attorney is, I fear, a Roman Catholic. Unfortunately Cheat-the-Gallows, the night on which he did justice to his name, destroyed all the documents in his possession, and, we fear, the Strickland papers among the rest.

“ The circumstances of the London lawyers precluded the formal registry of the transaction.

I only know what I have stated.—Your devoted servant to command,

“WILLIAM WRIGHTWELL.

“Written at Lattitat Court, Shrewsbury.”

This letter bore no date, but it must have been written between the late autumn of 1691 and the early spring of 1692.

CHAPTER L.

We spake of many a vanished scene,
Of what we once had thought and said,
Of what had been and might have been,
And who was changed, and who was dead.

Longfellow.

IT is the privilege of story-tellers to pass from time to time and from place to place—to conduct their heroes, heroines, and the persons with whom they are connected to one country to-day, to another to-morrow, and to bring them home again according to the pleasure or convenience of the writer. In the present instance, unity of purpose and plan, rather than the harmonies of time and place, is necessary to the interests of the narrative.

Time, so to speak, up to this advanced stage of the journey, has kept regular pace with the heroes and heroines (for there are more than one of each sex whom we celebrate).

Between Strickland's first appearance as the guide of the unfortunate monarch to the sea-side, and that valiant youth's departure from St. Ger-

mains for Namur, little more than three years had elapsed. Long, varied, and eventful years glided away ere we find it possible again to take up the thread of our narrative.

Over the interval we must speed with merely a passing glance at such persons or events as are indissolubly connected with the course of our tale.

Availing ourselves of the license granted to romance, we invite the reader's attention to the closing scenes of the narrative as they present themselves from different points in a new era, being the year in which James II. died an exile in France.

Great Britain had scarcely recovered from the shock of the Revolution. The reaction of public feeling turned fitfully and regretfully to the deposed Stuarts. The changes introduced by the new dynasty were but slowly subsiding into the constitution. The threatened recurrence of civil wars, with all their bloody and protracted horrors, was no longer dreaded in England. But men whose minds had been disturbed by the violent storm of politics and the tempest of passion which swept over the land, had not as yet returned to their wonted good temper. Agriculture had revived, and almost

defaced the sad traces of carnage and strife. Still, in Ireland and Scotland, the richest and the greenest fields heaved with the mouldering bodies of the slain, owing their fertility and verdure to the remains of the dead rather than to the labours of the living.

In Ireland nothing worth minutely relating had taken place since Sidney had ceased to be Lord-Lieutenant. The new government had not only suffered but fully encouraged the colonists to domineer over the natives.

In this country there continued to be two casts of different creeds, hating and trampling one on the other. The whole of the Island, however, except the North, resisted the newly established order of things, and in spite of all penalties retained their religion and their priesthood.

The history of England subsequent to the revolution had become a history of changes. Titus Oates was brought out of his gaol, restored to his two livings, and rewarded for his doings and sayings, discoveries and testimony, with a pension. The veracious Burnet had been rewarded with a living. Churchill's treachery was crowned by the Earldom of Marlborough. Dutch guards succeeded the regiments of James.

There were some of the greatest promoters of the "glorious" revolution, who, having fully identified the interests of their country with their own peculiar and personal advantages, began to find out that after all the golden age had not yet come round, or as the saying is now, "the game was not worth the candle."

Mary died 1694, and as different are the estimates of her character entertained by the Whigs and Tories as those formed by the conflicting parties of William. While some historians speak of her "blameless life," others speak of her as little better than "a parricide."

On the Sunday which followed her death, her virtues were celebrated in many of the churches and conventicles of London; while in others there were those who held her up to infamy as an unnatural and impious woman, who had the heart to receive from the vile hands of the disgusting and diabolical Oates a gross libel written by himself on the character of her own father. One clergyman spoke of her "charities and endearments to the people," while another preached on the text, "Go, see now this accursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter."

Her death left William in possession of the

undivided crown of Great Britain. Nothing, however, but his military genius made him at any time popular.

He went on with his battles and sieges till 1697, when the congress of Ryswick put an end to hostilities.

Charles, King of Spain, dying in 1700 without an heir, left all his vast dominions to the Duke of Anjou, grandson to Louis XIV., thus defeating all the efforts of William to prevent such a vast succession of wealth to the Bourbons, and rekindling his rage against France.

The death of the young duke of Gloster, the only surviving child of Anne of Denmark, the same year, appeared to remove a formidable rival out of the path of the son of James and Mary Béatrice to the throne. Nature, as if to vindicate his descent and his claims, had stamped his countenance evidently with the lineaments of the Stuarts and Bourbons.

About this time the fates of Stuart and Nassau were equally poised in the balance. But William possessed a worldly wisdom in which his luckless uncle was singularly deficient. He knew how to read the signs of the times. He bowed to the necessity of bending his sullen temper to a submission which only cost him less pain than

the loss of his diadem. He "stooped to conquer."

In the meantime, at the close of fourteen years of sorrow and anxiety, James was descending rapidly into the dark valley of the shadow of death.

Such was the state of affairs and the interests of parties in Great Britain, Ireland, and France. And such were the prospects of the Stuarts during the summer of 1701.

It was a pleasant morning in summer that a stranger of noble bearing, in the uniform of a military man of rank, rode down a descent winding along the coast of Kent towards the sea. He was well mounted and sat his horse with that air of elegance and command which declared him an officer of cavalry. As he gazed at the orchards now in full bloom, an ordinary observer might see that in his countenance which told of foreign service, his manly beauty and expressive features had assumed that cool, calm aspect, which is a true index of true courage and serenity. His complexion was tinged with the rich dark hue which exposure to the weather, and exercise bestow.

In his ear the far-sounding water murmured

as the voice of the past, in its ceaseless rise and swell and roll along the shore. All lay as placid as a sleeping babe. The trees and bushes, the wild roses in the hedges and bright green leaves, were hardly stirred by the soft sea breeze. The promise, perhaps, of summer, young as it was then, exceeds in the loveliness of blossom and fragrance, and the singing of birds, the fruits and fulfilment of autumn. To complete the the scene of rural peace and industry, the peasants were busily employed in the fields. The stranger reined up his steed and called to the foreman of a gang of weeders, desiring to know the nearest way to Faversham ; he also inquired whether Edwards was still alive and still mine host of the King's Head Inn. "I am," said Strickland, "unacquainted with this line of road, though many years ago, by another route, I travelled from London to Faversham." The man accordingly directed him how to proceed, observing, at the same time, that old Edwards and the hostelry were still in existence and that both had grown larger ; the landlord had waxed stouter in person, and become more overbearing in manner to his customers, at his grand hotel. He had reaped a golden harvest during the unhappy though short captivity of

King James in the "King's Head," and was the chief gainer by the rude attack upon his majesty, and richly rewarded for his brutality.

"It's only the loiks of Maister Edwards and the Dutch bullies that got any good by selling the real king. The new un aint no good to we poor hard-working folks." Saying this, and touching his hat, he saw the rider on the right way to Faversham, but called after him, and said, "You must please to enquire for "Wil-lim III.," which is the new name of the inn what was the "King's Head."

So many years of campaigns and wanderings, and such long absence from England, had given Major Strickland great confidence, that in the full-grown and confirmed man, whose brow bore the traces of resolution and thought, none would possibly recognise the stripling cornet of the Guards, who had done such material service to James twelve or thirteen years before.

His only risk was the chance of falling in with some of his comrades or some of the men whom he commanded in the wars. How changed in *outward* appearance was "The King's Head," which had risen to the title of the reigning monarch, and *internally* how like what it was; and yet, how different! In the years which had

passed since Strickland's first visit to Faversham, what a life was there crowded ! What a vast sum of active being did they comprise ! A period of twelve or thirteen years too, viewed from different positions in the chequered field of eventful life, how different do they appear ! How long is the vista of the future !—how short the road when we look back on the distance over which we have travelled ! How vast the difference—how strange the contrast—between the prospect and retrospect ! Go, tell the fond and eager youth of seventeen that a dozen years must pass before he can wed her who has been the first bright joy of his childhood—the first, the only love of his heart, the best part of his being—and you will open to his view an eternity, or at least an object, too distant for hope itself.

The improved and enlarged inn was more frequented than ever, though not so full as it had been nearly thirteen years before, when the fugitive monarch had unfortunately attracted the rabble at its door.

Edwards had in every sense increased in substance, and had in his old age taken to himself a buxom young wife, who, as well as himself, showed the stranger the proper amount of attention due

to his apparent rank, but deducting from it the degree of respect which the absence of an escort suggested.

The officer though still under thirty was too old a soldier to demand any thing more. He found himself in the oldest portion of the house, and in the very room now called the "old parlour," where he had formerly waited on the King, so that he himself was the most changed of all immediately around him. Two or three of the townspeople, a few of the old disbanded soldiers, and a jovial company of smugglers, occupied the additional part of the building, discussing the state of trade, and fighting their battles and their ships over small beer, amid fragrant vapours of tobacco.

They cursed the sovereign whose portrait blazed in glaring colours over the door. There was no chance of smuggling, and the war was over. Taxes were heavy, and trade, according to the accounts of the shopkeepers was bad. All concurred in the opinion that they could not taste a drop of good spirits which had never seen the face of a gauger, and the brandy was so bad and so dear, that even a noggin or a dribble of it was out of the question.

The most knowing of the party freely debated

on the fresh taxes, and the beginning of the National Debt, which they augured would become greater and greater. They swore it was the device of Dr. Gilbert Burnet.

“Well but,” said the jolly host, who kept a close eye on his guests, and an ear open to their remarks, “good King William has brought gin-drinking into fashion, and by his excise laws, encourages the pleasant practice.”

“And by his example,” cried an old sailor who had served under James.

After listening, or rather, unavoidably overhearing this somewhat confused conversation, Strickland began to think it time to make a friend at head-quarters. He had long before learnt the way to an English landlord's good opinion, and ordered a pint of the newly imported gin, gineva or schiedam. He had scarcely tasted it ere he pronounced it rather fiery for a hot summer's day, and ordered a pint of claret to cool his palate. This proof of the guest's good taste and liberality, exalted him almost to the rank of a man attended by his own servants in the estimation of mine host, who disappeared only to re-appear in a moment with smiles rippling over his fat face, and the cooling claret, just drawn from the cask, foaming over the

tankard. Strickland asked the bearer to sit down and help him to do justice to the generous wine. Both retired to a recess of the apartment, where Edwards was within call of the rest of the company, and could observe them by looking through a door which had a glass in the upper part of it. A second tankard was ordered and quaffed. The result seemed to open the landlord's heart, and began to inspire him with a wish to make some return in the shape of news. He spoke of the changes of property, the downfall of the Tories and the rise of the Whigs; but he advocated no party, and avoided the danger of politics.

“To show you what may be gained by a good Protestant under a Protestant king,” said he, “though that Protestant had stuck to the Papist, the king as was, to the very last ‘nailing his colours to the mast,’ as the fellow himself said. Yet, that there chap who actually with his old father stood between the mob and James, is now as rich as a Jew—a regular landed man.”

“What's his name?” asked Strickland, with an affected air of great indifference.

“Ben Brown,” replied the host. “I'll tell you how it was. So long as there was a

gleam of sunshine on James's side of the hedge, young Ben the sailor trimmed his sails accordingly; but when the sun came to the other side, Ben came with it. He saw which way the wind blew, and then made hay while the sun and wind helped him. Over comes my fine gentleman with his lady wife from Germany."

"From Germany?" interrupted Strickland.

"Saint Germany?" says the other.

"Perhaps, St. Germain's, you mean?" said Major Strickland.

"You have it," exclaimed Edwards. "Well, he came from foreign parts with her who was once a servant of Lady Winchelsea, who has a mighty fancy for her."

"Does Brown live at Faversham?" inquired Strickland, cautiously.

"Lord love 'e! He live in such a place as this! He only came over here to bury his old father. Some call him "Gentleman Brown," and some—especially the sailors—call him "the Admiral."

Strickland, feeling his way into the growing familiarity of mine host of the "King William," asked him to what grand place the grand and fortunate Brown had betaken himself.

"I weren't aware as how your honour knowed 'em," said the landlord.

"You have, mine host," answered the other, "given me a sufficient interest in him to make me wish to know more about him."

Then, with a landlord's peculiar look and laugh, the landlord answered, "He is now a farmer, and ploughs the land with more profit than he ploughed the sea. When he was here he talked about the wars, and told some of the blue-jackets who remembered him that Cornet Strickland, who cut such a dash in defence of the King as was, fighting desperately by the side of Sarsfield, in the battle of Landen, in foreign parts, had been cut to pieces with the great Irish general whom he was endeavouring to protect against fearful odds."

"Brown then had some acquaintance with Cornet Strickland?" remarked the stranger.

"I tell 'ee what it is, Sir," said Edwards. "He loved him as his own brother, did that Ben Brown, and changed his blue jacket for a black one at the young papist's death. Though all on us hated his d——d popery, we admired the young blood's spirit. He would fight Old Nick himself. What a pity those Strickland fellers are such Papishers! Whoi it seems only

t'other day as his uncle, the great admiral, disgraced the navy by setting up an altar and a mass and other idols in his flag-ship."

Hazarding not another word, Major Strickland ordered his horse, and took the shortest cut for Canterbury. It was drawing towards evening when he entered the ancient city. The sky was of a purple seldom seen in England, but the whole day had been more like a visitor than a native of the island. There was a border of light upon the western sky. The most enchanting colour of that summer evening is not easily named. The last beams of the fading day kissed ancient turret, dome, and tower, spreading a hallowed influence over the old city of the old Faith. The air was still. There was a mysterious and solemn beauty on all around.

Strickland's mind was filled with musings as sublime as they were melancholy. He put up his horse at the nearest inn. Then entered the lonely grave-yard and quaint old fane of St. Martin's Church. "Within this holy building, a pagan temple twelve centuries ago, that first great missionary to our Saxon forefathers preached the Gospel to a heathen multitude and their king," said he to himself, while he was contemplating this most unpretending pile,

associated so deeply with Christianity in England. An old Catholic, who dwelt much among the tombs, and besought there the intercession of the saints, seeing Strickland so religiously interested in the old place, showed him the mutilated font at which Ethelbert and most of his warriors received their baptism.

With high and holy veneration the old hermit, his snow white locks streaming in the evening air, accompanied the Major up St. Martin's Hill. Both looked upon the sacred city as it reposed in the setting sun. They spoke of the little band of Christian missionaries who first entered the city one thousand one hundred years earlier, carrying before them a silver cross and a banner bearing the figure of our Lord, and singing Litanies, thus calling down God's mercy on the English land and nation, "Who have, alas!" sighed the old Papist, "lost the Faith, and cut themselves off from God's mercy!"

At length passing under the arch of Christ's gate they soon found themselves upon the wide expanse of the Cathedral yard, the huge minster with its wand-like tower rising vast and grand. The solemn structure was bathed in a sea of beautiful twilight like the gorgeous temple of a vision.

Perceiving that the stranger was a military officer, the old man who was familiar with every object of interest ancient or modern within the sacred precincts, pointed out to him the graves of several brave officers who a century earlier had suppressed the rebellion in Ireland and come home to die. Encouraged by the old man's manner and anxiety to direct the attention of the visitor to the most remarkable monuments, the Major inquired for the residence of Mr. Benjamin Brown. But before the venerable man could make any reply, the youngest of some little boys who were playing about the graves, said, "That's my daddy and I am going home to his house."

"Shall I go with you?" asked Strickland.

"If you please, Sir," answered the child, who was about six years old, "I shall be glad of company for it is getting dark, and mammy will scold me for being so late."

Saying these words the little boy, with all that confidence with which the countenance and voice of the stranger inspired him, gave his hand to him and struck down that long and gloomy cloister that, springing overhead into a low roof of groined arches, called "the dark entry," traverses the base of the cathedral

connecting by its vaulted passages the southern precincts with the northern cloisters. Emerging from "the dark entry" into the quadrangle of the Green Court, the Major and his little guide passed rapidly under the Armoury and King's Gate, and thus reaching the outskirts of the town, they turned an angle in the wall and passed back by St. Martin's. Proceeding northwards they soon found themselves in open meadows and fields. The nearest object which attracted the eye of the Major was a farm house, which judging by its general appearance, gardens and outbuildings might he believed have been the residence of the proprietor. Nothing could be more tranquil than the landscape beneath the pale beams of the moon which had now begun to shed over the scene her borrowed rays. As the traveller approached, he observed that a woman of that sort of appearance which demands the appellation of "lady," was standing at the door.

"There's dear mammy," cried the little guide.

Strickland at once addressed her as the worthy dame of the house. But she was so anxiously watching and waiting for her little boy, that she noticed the child first. "You little truant, what kept you so long? Your

daddy and I have been quite frightened about you."

Before the child could make any excuse the strange visitor again accosted her, "Good evening, if it please you, fair dame. Your little man here has brought me to see you."

She felt perplexed, if not dismayed, for though she had frequently had a glimpse of our hero, who now addressed her, she had never seen much of him, and the very little she had seen was a long, long time ago, when he was a fair slight youth. The matron herself was scarcely changed less from the merry-hearted maid to the staid and comely wife and mother, than was her visitor from a page to a major. She held an infant in her arms—while a chubby little thing she called Kate peeped out at the grand stranger from under her white apron.

"What may be your pleasure, sir?" she asked with an air of good breeding beyond even her present respectable rank in life. Her manner was partly the result of the amiable courtesy of good nature; but yet so precisely in keeping with her position under such unusual circumstances, that it must have been partly acquired, so free was it from forwardness and yet so perfectly composed. The stranger looked at her earnestly and replied,

“I am on my way from France into Shropshire, and I desire the happiness of seeing your husband, Mistress Brown.”

“Come in, sir,” said the surprised dame with a smile of respectful welcome. “The day has been hot and the dust on your uniform tells of a journey; may I offer you a draught of October ale or any refreshment while I send a messenger after my husband, who is gone in quest of this naughty little fellow,” giving, at the same time, a look of gentle rebuke at little Ben, who seemed delighted with his new and brilliant acquaintance. She was just leaving the room, when her guest had declined her hospitable offer to send for Mr. Brown, when that honest-hearted fellow, of his own accord, returned. He still was every inch Ben Brown the sailor, retaining much of his old manner and appearance. Under the civilising influence of his wife, however, the rough corners and rude sides of his nautical exterior were rubbed off, if not polished into respectful civility, which bore about as much likeness to his former self as his present improved attire bore to his rugged seafaring garb at Faversham, in 1688. His open countenance still wore the same old look of good humour and rude health; but under the sparkles

which enlivened his features, here and there a furrow, ploughed by Time, might be discovered. He looked on the majestic officer with surprise, rather than satisfaction, and wondered what could have brought a man of his martial dignity to that secluded house in the fields at such an hour.

Strickland was the first to break the ice, and said,

“I have a great interest in this part of England,” in that amicable tone which wins confidence, but with a voice and manner evidently accustomed to command; “I would learn something especially about the old monastery and palace, and I have reason to believe, Mr. Brown, that you are not ignorant of the traditions of the place.”

“Judging from your appearance, as a handsome and dashing young officer of the army, you would, if I may be so bold,” said Mr. Brown, “have naturally felt more curiosity in the history of the old ancient barracks, or the Isle of Thanet. But first of all, sir,—to what wind do we owe the honour of your throwing out anchor in our moorings of Barton Farm?”

“To ask you a few questions, which I am sure you will answer,” was the reply.

"I must hear and consider what they are first," said the other ; adding, "I take you, sir, for a man fresh from the wars."

"And I am certain you have served in the navy," rejoined the unrecognised officer ; "let there, then, be a cordial feeling between us. Both arms of the service should be in friendship united." Saying this Major Strickland took the sun-burnt brawny hands of Brown into his own, but the worthy sailor gave no sign of recognition.

"Be seated, sir," said he, "the night comes on apace and with it threatening clouds from the sea."

Strickland looked out. The sky was already changed ! There was not a breath of wind upon the lawn, yet every leaf was quivering and the blossoms dropped faster than the coming big drops of rain. A blue mist was hanging over the sloping woods. After the sultry stillness came deep swelling gusts, and then a lull.

"This surely bodes a storm," cried Brown. The words were scarcely uttered when the rushing and roaring of hail diverted the thoughts of the inmates from everything else. This was one of those rare thunder storms that come from the south. From cloud to cloud "the live"

lightning leaped. The heavens were convulsed. The earth groaned as if beneath a heavy weight. So sudden was the burst of thunder that the whole atmosphere of sulphur seemed to be hurled down in one crashing roar thro' the now black night.

"Let us make all snug, Kate," cried the sailor, "for this is hardly a safe night to be ashore; but any port in a storm, Colonel, for such I take you to be," cried Ben.

"No bad harbour, this, neither," said Strickland, pleasantly.

The tempest did more than a formal introduction to make the stranger at home with the Browns. Tempests by land and sea were talked over till supper time, when all sat down to a social supper. The soldier and the sailor had much in common to give mutual interest to their discourse, to which Kate listened with close attention and wonder.

"Whatever concerns the real king and queen," observed the hostess, "is news which I love to hear, and I could sit and listen all night to this gentleman, who seems to know so much about their past life."

Strickland had run over much that made her anxious to learn more, she requested him to

relate some of the battles in which he had fought for James.

“The folks here,” said she, “speak of the havoc which the house of Stuart have made in the Church and State, and the tyranny which they long exercised over men’s persons and consciences, they say, should make soldiers slow to use weapons for their restoration. For my own part, while I was in the royal household no one attempted to make me a papist, and there’s my Lord and Lady Winchelsea right down Protestants were hand and glove with their Majesties.”

“True, Kate,” cried Ben, “and there wasn’t a better friend to the King than my lord, unless it may be that there young fellow, Cornet Strickland, who rode down the mob at Faversham and led us on to rescue the poor King.”

“Yes,” says Kate, “I met him riding as fast as the wind, just before I saw you, and made bold to speak to his Majesty. Perhaps this loyal colonel may have heard or seen something of the young gentleman. My young mistress at St. Germain’s was breaking her heart about him when he left her for the wars, just before we were married. But they tell me he was slain many years ago in some battle in foreign parts. Lady

Winchelsea, who is now with my lord in London, declared to me that Miss Plowden would die of grief."

"Not quite so bad as that neither," retorted Ben, "for I heard from some of the folks at Hale's Castle that she had another craft in tow, the honourable O'Brian Someat, whose sister, a widow, married a great Royal duke."

Strickland turned deadly pale, and placed his hands over his face as if to screen it from the lightning that was still seen to flash at long intervals.

With the quick perception peculiar to her sex and former calling, the matron silently observed the sudden change which her guest could not conceal from her notice. She gently chid her husband for using his old nautical phrases, and for talking about matters of which he had such a confused notion. Then, either for the sake of truth or to remove an impression which so mysteriously seemed to give the stranger pain, she observed, as if addressing Brown alone, that to her certain knowledge it was the lady Mary Powis and not Miss Plowden to whom Mr. O'Brian Clare was engaged in marriage."

Before the conversation could be resumed, the

babe, in the strongest language it could express, cried out for the mother, who immediately curtsied "good night" to the visitor, leaving him in the care of her spouse, who soon conducted him to his "berth," and retired to his own. The storm and the baby were both hushed to rest and the house was quiet.

In the stillness of his chamber Strickland asked himself, was the rustic or rather seafaring simplicity of his host to be trusted? was the obliging and hospitable Kate now a sincere loyalist, while basking in the sunshine which quenched the glory of James for ever? were they both honest in their hearts? if so, what object could he have in disguise? he would, would he not, do better justice to all parties to make himself known as early as possible? These were questions which such reflections as he could give them before he fell asleep had not enabled him to answer. There was, indeed, one question that haunted him in sleep: could it be possible that Mary Plowden loved Clare?

The next morning the tumult of mind which for some time disturbed him had subsided, when the bright sun of a cloudless morning aroused him. Having resolved to let matters take their course, or to let opportunity suggest the dis-

covery, he sprang light-hearted and refreshed from his bed, and explored, under the guidance of Brown, some of the most celebrated places in the neighbourhood.

After breakfast, when the little ones, as their father had it, were "stowed away" out of hearing, our pleasant little party betook themselves to an arbour of roses, interlaced with woodbine, clematis, jasmine, and other fragrant climbers. There, according to Kate's desire of the preceding night, which she again renewed, their visitor briefly, in such plain language as his host and hostess could understand, narrated the various successes and reverses of the battles fought for the cause of James, from the siege of Derry till the peace of 1697. He simply told the results, without reference to himself, crowding enough to fill four volumes into a few words!

"Matters connected with the Treaty of Ryswick and our poor king's ill-judged and most unfortunate protest against the decisions of the Congress and against the validity of William's acts, as well as the presence of the representatives of the deposed monarch, brought us into difficulty, and almost exposed to ridicule all who were attached at the time to the embassy of the

Royal exile, who still claimed for himself the position of king of the British Continent and Ireland. From the conclusion of this unhappy business of James to the early part of the spring of this year, and even now, I have only returned to England on some private business of my own; I landed at Dover in the hope of seeing Sir Edward Hales, of whom I can learn nothing beyond his imprisonment in the Tower of London. I am desirous to see Lord and Lady Winchelsea, but grieve to find they are in London. Alas! how many friends have the civil wars torn from us!"

"There will be none of them more missed and lamented," rejoined Ben, "than Master Strickland; he was a reglar good un, and courageous, and yet feeling-like. He won all our hearts at Faversham eleven years come next Christmas, or thereabouts; I was over head and ears in love with this here old girl, and made a fool of myself about her when I heard as how she was agoing to France to wait on a Miss Ploughman. He set my mind so much at ease, and hadn't a bit of pride about him, and listened to me so softly that I'm sure I think he must have been on the same tack as myself."

"You mean Miss Mary Plowden, poor dear

young lady — how she took Master Robert's departure from St. Germain's to heart! She has been so bad and so sad, my Lady Winchelsea told me, since the death of Captain Strickland, at Landen, that she looks like death and wanders about by herself, and mourning for the young gentleman she used to call her brother."

"But surely, Colonel," chimed in Brown, "if you were in that battle, and knew of Sarsfield's mortal wound, you must be able to tell us somewhat of the brave officer who fought by his side, and was killed in trying to save him. I would give the world to see him once more; oh! that he were with us. I have that to tell him which would make a man of him, and restore him to his fortune, and make him right glad."

"I cannot say that I am altogether ignorant of the gentleman in whom you are so deeply interested," observed the supposed stranger; "but really there are so many Stricklands attached to the good cause, that one man can scarcely be expected to know half of them. If, however, I had known him whom you wot of better I should have been a better man." Then, turning to Mrs. Brown, he asked of her the last news from St. Germain's.

“The last thing we heard for certain,” answered the matron, “is that many of the great court gentlemen and ladies, feeling themselves only a useless burden on their majesties at St. Germain—since the great monarch of France has acknowledged the Prince of Orange, to the exclusion of James, many of the exiled families—and Colonel Plowden’s among them—have returned to England for greater safety. It goes to my heart to think of poor dear good Miss Mary. The very last time I ever made her toilet she was half dead with grief at separation from him she called her brother. Oh ! what must she suffer now that he is dead ! She give her hand to another ! If the son of Lord Clare, or any other man, could lead her to the altar, she would say, ‘No’ where she was expected to say ‘Yes.’”

“You both,” remarked Strickland, “seem much devoted to our royal family and their friends, and so am I. Let me, therefore, in return for the happiness of this entertainment, and for the pleasure of your loyal conversation, tell you, Mistress Brown, something which will recall the past and greatly interest your curiosity :—

“When you met Cornet Strickland riding as hard as he could for the lord-lieutenant of the

county, to summon him to the King at Faversham, your words to Cornet Strickland were, 'Hasten, Sir; ride; for the life of ye, speed! For Heaven's sake, spare not the steed! Oh! oh! they will murder the King!'"

She to whom these words were now recited was struck dumb with amazement, and grew pale with a sympathetic sort of anxiety. She was startled into a sudden shock of surprise which choked her utterance. At last she said, with agitation, "The very words!"

While Brown looked on, utterly at a loss what to think of the passage between his wife and the stranger, he himself was scarcely less thunderstruck at the same stranger's recurrence to his own words.

"I can," said the narrator, "tell you, too, Mr. Benjamin, what you said to me, word for word, on the same morning, 12th December, 1688, at Faversham: "D— me, if I part with that 'ere gal for all the world."

The astonishment of Brown at this most literal re-echo of his own words after so many years—spoken, too, as they had been to one whom he believed, at the date of this conversation, was no more—seemed like speech from the dead. To him it recurred as a mysterious revelation

connecting his own destiny with that of his visitor. His wonder was succeeded by apprehension of some miraculous secret evolved by the mission of his guest, of whose very name he was still ignorant. "Odzooks, Cavalier!" he cried, but for a moment could say no more.

On the other hand, the reciter's heart rose to his lips during this conversation, "For now," thought he, "is my time to speak out."

CHAPTER LI.

When Judges a campaigning go,
And on their benches look so big,
What gives them consequence, I trow,
Is nothing but a bushel wig.—*Peter Pindar.*

HAVING satisfied himself, that he was in safe hands, and that he had every reason to confide in the honour of the party in whose name the hereditary estates of five thousand a year had for security been vested, and inferring that they were only spending on their own account a moiety of such rents as the Protestant agent in the North of England transmitted to them, for the expenditure necessary to avoid suspicion, Strickland made up his mind to make himself and his object known, unless, indeed, his entertainers themselves should relieve him from the task by their own sagacity.

The revived words which seemed to both as secrets sleeping with the dead, chimed back gone time wonderfully in their ears, and induced the most observant of the two, Kate Brown, to

examine carefully the features of the person that recalled them. She started, on observing that under the somewhat bronzed complexion and garb of the athletic, broad-shouldered Major the the matured countenance of the slender youth—the pretty page of Whitehall seemed to reside. She looked again, especially when the stranger was deep in conversation with her husband, so that she had an opportunity of scrutinising him fixedly and intently, without any breach of good manners. At first she wavered in her belief, and could not but doubt the reality of her recollection; for the difference of dress and of age was such as to effect a change of appearance, and of his countenance itself, that might defy the recognition even of his intimate friends, from whose eyes it had been withdrawn so many years. The bewildered couple stared in amazement at each other, but made no sign. The impression on Kate's memory returned and became deeper, until it directed her peculiar attention to the person who had thus attracted her anxious notice, and awakened in her memory such a throng of events and coincidents, that she involuntarily gazed, until her eye encountered that of the subject of her inquiry; and as their looks met, there glanced from those of the mysterious

stranger, an expression of good-humoured pleasantry which intimated much more than words had yet expressed.

Kate once more sought to fix her eyes, in order to ascertain that she had not mistaken that look which bordered on recognition. But her interesting guest afforded her no long time to study him. He smiled the smile of his youth. His voice was the cadence of the past. His accents the accents of other days. The whole truth flashed from the history he had narrated, through her mind, and identified him with the lover of her mistress—the hero of reality—more distinguished and adventurous than the hero of romance. Her own discovery whirled a tumult through her thoughts and embarrassed her. But Strickland, with all that easy courtesy and gentlemanly tact for which he was so remarkable, soon relieved her from her delicate diffidence and extraordinary position as the hostess whom it delighted an illustrious and unexpected superior to honour with his company and conversation. He gave Kate one hand and Benjamin the other. Suspicion and doubt were banished; all was now clear, serene, bright, and cloudless as the noon-day which witnessed this scene in the rose bower of Barton.

Strickland, adapting his narrative to the understanding of his hearers, told them briefly how he escaped the perils of Landen. "Neerwinden," said he, "was a spectacle at which the oldest soldiers stood aghast. Great lords and renowned leaders were mingled in the mutilated masses of the vulgar slain, bathed in one vast sea of blood. There lay Uzes, first in the aristocracy of France. There Sarsfield, our great commander fought; and like brave Dundee at Killiecrankie, received his death-wound in the arms of victory. Most dear to memory is the name of the Irish hero. We fought round him to the last, and well may Captain Clare be proud of his connexion with Berwick, who is the soul of honour and the perfection of valour. He was in the bloodiest of the carnage, when one of his mother's brothers, George Churchill, recognised his nephew. A hurried embrace passed between the kinsmen. Brave Berwick stood a captive—stern, solemn, and unmoved—before the usurper of his father's throne, who uncovered in presence of his prisoner. Soon after he was exchanged for the Duke of Ormond.

"It was amidst the rout and uproar, while the battle was raging along the entrenchment of the allied armies, that we made several

desperate attempts to bear away our beloved Sarsfield, who had been mortally wounded. Twice were we who rallied like a living wall about him overpowered by numbers. Twice were we repulsed and struck down in the press ; but my brave comrades and myself were resolutely determined to rescue our chief from an ignominious end or to die in the struggle. Numbers perceiving the object of our efforts rushed upon us like an avalanche, until I was almost left alone—attacked on all sides—when my charger came down with a crash as a bullet passed through his head, and in another moment I should have been the corpse the enemy took me for, had not the gay and gallant O'Brian Clare, in the hottest of the fray, extricated me from the dead horse, unobserved by the men in fierce action, and aided by a private, placed me by the side of great Sarsfield on his litter, and eventually, supported by his men, removed us to a place of safety. Sarsfield never rose from the pallet to which he was removed. In the reports of that bloody day my fate has been identified with that of the Duke, whom we love still to honour by the name of Sarsfield, most dear to us who served under him. I was, however, only stunned by the butt end of a musket,

and soon mounting a fresh horse placed at my service, lost not a moment in rejoining the main army.

“Some time before the battle I received a letter from Miss Plowden, informing me, among other tidings, of your intended marriage,” he continued, “and return to England with Brown,” (addressing himself to Kate). “Your young mistress also anticipated the necessity of her seeking another asylum, should Louis be compelled to acknowledge the usurper as the sovereign of the British dominions. This was the last opportunity I had of having or answering a letter from her.”

“So far,” observed Kate, “our accounts agree.”

The events of the succeeding years are already known to the reader. To detail them would fill a volume. Suffice it here to say that the practical result of the facts narrated by both parties was, that Brown had never received more than an abstract of the deed of conveyance of the estate of Strickland-upon-the-Lakes,—that Major Robert Strickland, now the heir and successor to his late father, Sir Simon Strickland, who died when Robert was an infant, never found himself at liberty to return to his native

country till the spring of the year which closes our narrative, 1701. That even after his arrival in England, his prospects were obscured by the recent laws enacted against papists and non-jurors.

“Failing,” said he, “in my efforts to find Lord Winchelsea in this neighbourhood, after my disappointment at Dover, all I could learn about Sir Edward Hales, was that, as his destiny had been the Tower of London, so there he remained still a captive and a ruined man. Without further delay I hastened to Faversham, fully expecting to see you there. But to my great disappointment I found out from your former neighbour, old Edwards, of the ‘King’s Head,’ now styled the ‘William III.,’ that you were living like a prince at or near Canterbury.”

“Here is the letter of advice,” continued Strickland (handing the document to his host), “which I received on the eve of the expedition into Flanders, under Louis, from Notary Wrightwell. It chiefly concerns Colonel Plowden, but speaks of you as a trustee of estates to which I am the legal heir.”

“I know all about it; I have seen the outside of it at any rate before now,” said Brown.

Further explanation was cut short by the arrival of a messenger on horseback covered with dust, bearing all the marks of hard riding. He was charged with an epistle involving important interests. The letter was marked "private and confidential," and was for "the hands of Master Benjamin Brown," from the firm of Holdfast and Co. It summoned him to whom it was addressed immediately to London.

Their horses were brought forth, and the soldier, in company with the sailor, was in less than an hour proceeding briskly towards the capital.

Many and various were the entertaining anecdotes which enlivened their way till they parted at the outskirts of the metropolis; the sailor for the offices of "Holdfast and Co.," the soldier for Plowden, which he found altered but not improved.

Neither the Colonel nor any part of his family had returned to the mansion. The property, however, as well as that of Aston, according to the somewhat vague statement of the steward, though having been forfeited to the crown, was again restored to the rightful owner, in spite of all the manœuvres in the first instance achieved by

the worthy Maysfiend and Co., the shocking revelations of whose guilt in the business left no doubt that the Strickland vouchers had been fraudulently obtained by the man of dirty work a little time before his suicide ; that a note in pencil mark had reached his widow, bitterly complaining of what he called the "terrible necessity," and of the ruin which the smooth-faced Maysfiend—"Foulfiend and Soul of Satan," as he called that human reptile—had brought upon him and entailed upon his family. Some said the last letter to his wife was scrawled with his own blood—which, in a first attempt at suicide, he shed—instead of ink. The wretched woman had been reduced to such straits that all her furniture was sold to pay her rent, that large sums had been offered by Wrightwell and his successor for the missing deed of transfer to Ben Brown. The widow Cheat-the-gallows was actuated by two motives : revenge on the oily hypocrite who had, as she declared, ruined the body and soul of her late husband ; and the still stronger one, the promised reward, which, if obtained, would remove her difficulties and distress.

Having first of all communicated this intelligence to Ben Brown in a plain letter, with a

request that he would as early as possible report progress, and address his reply and correspondence—"Major Robert Strickland, Aston Manor House, in the Wolds," where Colonel Plowden, since his return to England, had, it appeared, been in residence, our hero set out for the distant mansion of his friend, where, after a rapid ride, he arrived early on the third day. Neither the Colonel nor his family, most unfortunately, were at home on his arrival. As for Miss Plowden, she was still detained in France.

Preferring Aston to Plowden, the Colonel had rebuilt the manor house there some years prior to Strickland's visit. The restored, or rather the new mansion, now afforded all these comforts and pleasant resources, which none but a genuine English country house can supply. The stud, the kennel, the pleasure grounds, and all the surroundings were in high condition. His elder brothers, each of whom had succeeded in his turn to the inheritance, were now dead, and the present proprietor was the next heir. He felt it his happiness, no less than his privilege, to emulate his predecessors in the style, as well as the duties which such ample possessions imposed.

It was but a few days before the arrival of Strickland that he had matched five splendid grey horses with a sixth, which now completed a magnificent, well-trained, well-bred team.

But like every other blessing of this life, Plowden's happiness, and enjoyment of his recovered domains, was not without alloy. His good fortune excited the envy of his Whig neighbours, who considered that the Plowden property, which had been subject to confiscation, would have conduced to the advantage of the state more beneficially if the heritage of the non-juring papist had been conferred on themselves. Indeed, so violent and annoying was the conduct of some of the Wold magistrates, who desired to bask in the Orange groves of Royal favour, that the Colonel determined to consult some of his Catholic friends, who had been magistrates, on the subject, and had, with this object in view, only started an hour before Strickland's appearance at the mansion, for Banbury.

Our hero, impatient of delay, resolved to follow his friend, and was soon mounted on a fresh horse on his road to Banbury, where at a certain house, according to the direction of the butler, Colonel Plowden was to be found. He

dashed along at a pace which was hastened into a gallop, by the spur which the rider plied under the influence of eagerness, which urged him forward; nor did he slacken his course until a crowd at the entrance of the town, apparently brought together by some exciting object of interest or curiosity, obstructed his way. No sooner had Strickland learnt the cause of the hubbub, and, by dint of effort, realised the extraordinary and astounding fact, that it was his own revered friend of whom he was in quest who had become the centre of attraction, than he rushed into the rabble with his hand on the hilt of his sword. Amid a confounded hum of many voices, the only words which he could distinctly hear were these:—"In the name of King William I seize these horses, under the warrant which I herewith serve upon you, Edmund William, commonly called Colonel Plowden."

The terrible burst of anger which agitated Strickland at such an indignity offered to his friend shot a pang through his frame. It cost him all his power of self-restraint to control himself. He was advancing towards the officer of justice when the owner of the equipage, perceiving his purpose, but not recog-

nizing in him his comrade in loyalty and arms, cried out to him to refrain, but exclaimed, "By Heaven! this shall not pass without further inquiry. Do you mean to say that you are authorised to seize my horses on the king's highway?"

"Come, come, master, that won't do," roared the stubborn brute into whose hands the gallant lover, if not "tamer," of horses had fallen. "You know all about the act of parliament, through which you were driving your coach-and-six. Not so fast, master; it ain't no good."

It was now, in his turn with much effort that the Colonel could restrain his temper, his words, or his hands. He managed, however, to make no other reply than a contemptuous smile.

In the meantime a motley assemblage of impertinent and idle spectators pressed round the coach, each of them looking curiously for the effect of this proceeding.

The crowd was assuming the aspect of a mob when Strickland rode up, and was still increasing and rudely intruding themselves on the outraged loyalist to such an offensive degree, that once more the Major was urging his horse against the servant of the government, when

Plowden called out to him at the very top of his voice, "Forbear, Sir; further remonstrance is worse than thrown away on such a creature. We must yield to the king's mandate."

Major Strickland bit his lip. There was no escaping. The heavy carriage rolled into the nearest inn-yard; the horses were secured by the small man in authority. How often does punishment, rather than the offence which incurs it, or even rather than guilt itself, mortify our proud spirit! Plowden and Strickland gloried in the Faith and the Loyalty which brought this penalty upon them, and entailed it upon their families. And yet, the open outrage offered to the Colonel in the neighbourhood, for which he had done much, mastered his patience and was more than he could endure.

The two gentlemen as soon as they actually met could only speak in broken sentences at first; but the future father-in-law soon recognised him whom he had never ceased to regard as a son. As they became more composed, mutual explanations were made.

It was, as we have said, but a few days before the visit of Strickland, that Colonel Plowden had with great difficulty, and at a high figure, matched five splendid grey horses with a sixth

of equal beauty and colour, all high steppers, with grand action, and yet more remarkable still for their speed, high breeding, and excellent training. Than the complete team there was not a finer turn-out in all protestant England. Small blame to the man who was proud of such an equipage, as Colonel Plowden could himself drive with his own hands over any thing short of the stones of London.

After the first hearty greetings and affectionate congratulations on their safe return to England, the Colonel, with his dear visitor, sallied out into the town and engaged as many tradesmen and labourers as he could find, for the purpose, as Strickland supposed, of carrying on his improvements at Aston, whither the two officers returned in a hired carriage; and as they slowly jogged along, having entrusted to a servant Strickland's horse which had a narrow escape from seizure, Plowden—in more anger than perhaps ever until then disturbed his usually placid temper—related how, just at the moment he was praising the new horse, and congratulating himself on the recreation of driving such a dashing team after so many years of exile and hardship, the fellow whom Strickland first heard, aided by his men, took the leaders

by their heads, and cried, "Stop! papist, Stop!"

"Master Poundem, the worthy magistrate of Banbury, is at the bottom of the business," added Colonel Plowden.

Strickland, who was an absolute stranger to the new laws of the Liberator, expressed his disgust and astonishment at the robbery promoted by law.

"My dear fellow," cried the deprived Colonel, "this is nothing compared to what is in store for us. At this very moment, even the private exercise of the old religion is forbidden under enormous penalties. One hundred pounds is the reward for the apprehension of a priest, and any hound is good enough to hunt him. And as we have practically learned this day, papists are not allowed to ride or drive a horse above the value of five pounds, and any person may demand the animal in question for that sum, whatever may be the real value of the animal. Such, my brave Catholic hero, is our era of British freedom! such the early fruits of the "Glorious Revolution," in which Englishmen exult! Such are the daily crosses and losses to which we are exposed, and to which we must now, alas! submit, unless we think it of more

consequence to keep our horses than our consciences."

The very next morning, Strickland was startled from his sleep before sun-rise by a tremendous noise, which seemed to shake the whole house, and reminded him of the battering of the besieged fortress. Nor was the assault confined to any one point. His first impression was, that as blow followed blow against the walls, the assailants must soon effect an entrance through a breach, or undermine the building. The attack on Lady Place was nothing to the havoc, of which he had heard Hough speak, which the enemy appeared to be making of the manor house.

"Where," thought he, "could the master of it be all this time? Was it the rabble who surrounded the coach yesterday, who were venting their fury upon the house to-day?"

Stunned by the shock, which awakened him from his sleep, and confused by the rapid march of events, which he witnessed,—he could only imagine that some party had been set on by the Whigs, who were active in putting down popery. He was soon sufficiently dressed to make his appearance at the window of his apartment. From this, he could see more to confirm than to

remove his impression that a hostile attack had been made. The first sight that met his eye well accorded with the sounds which continued to assail his ears. Not less than fifty men were all engaged in demolishing the innocent mansion, and had already made terrible gashes in its fair face. Nor was it till Strickland beheld with perplexity and wonder, the Lord of the Manor himself, calmly contemplating the work of destruction, that his alarm for that valiant gentleman was relieved. He had scarcely joined him outside, at the base of operations, when he learnt from the Colonel's own lips that some of the very same men who were now employed by no other than himself to pull down the magnificent mansion had only a very little time before been occupied in building it.

So violent had been the impulse of the owner, though usually so mild and placid, that he declared he would not leave one stone upon another of his hospitable house. Nor did he desist from his purpose until urgent necessity for the accommodation of his servants arrested the destruction of the entire edifice.

“Never will I dwell among a people who suffered a Plowden of Plowden—the benefactor of all around him, and the son of their

fathers' friend—to be outraged, betrayed, and defrauded.”

It was in the midst of this onslaught on the harmless house—the once-loved residence of the Plowdens—about the third day of the assault upon it, when the work waxed warm and the scattered fragments and *débris* were chaos itself, when a letter from Ben Brown arrived “for the hands” of Major Strickland. There was only one London stage-coach at the time, and that plied only between the metropolis and the north, so that the postman who delivered the letter was on horseback, and with great difficulty made his way to the servants' entrance. So great was the mass of ruins and rubbish which obstructed his way, that he was lost in amazement as well as in the distracted place.

“Is this the work of the Government?” asked the man of letters, as his horse stumbled over a piece of furniture which had occupied its place in one of the demolished apartments.

Only three days earlier, Aston Manor House had been one of the most commodious, comfortable, and elegant houses in the country for miles round, as far as the mansion of the Duke of Shrewsbury. But since our hero's arrival, disorder and confusion had completely disguised

the features of the place. Straggling heaps of furniture, books, chests, papers, pictures, and a thousand ill-assorted things, were piled promiscuously in the hall, and the more common articles were thrown outside under a temporary covering.

Such was the aspect of Aston Manor House, when the momentous and important letter from the faithful Benjamin reached Strickland, amid the scene of desolation. Divesting the epistle of the coarsest part of its nautical and provincial dress, it went thus :—

“ HONoured SIR,—We have gained the day— or what comes to the same thing, we have taken all the wind out of the enemy's sails. The crew are dumfounded, without a shot in their locker ; their craft has sprung a leak in the evidence. To-morrow we shall give her a broadside which will send her to the bottom. She is on a desperate tack, but will lose her point. Maysfiend is brewing mischief, but it will founder his own ship. His pirate captain piped starboard watch to quarters ; but before he could get them into action, or even take in the top-gallants of his frigate, a shot well aimed by Holdfast's first mate went bang through his topsail, which we gave him no time to clew up. It lays over her side. When the

smoke clears away after the action she will scarcely have a stitch of canvas to carry her out of our range; or if she saves enough to scud under, she will go down like her second mate, Cheat-the-gallows. Bribes are as thick as sprats and are thrown into the dirty waters to catch salmon. That scoundrel who ran to leeward with everything is in everybody's mouth. How he *did* forge, falsify, and thieve, *to be sure!* All the money he could clutch is gone with him to the devil, at the bottom of the deep sea. We harpoon whales and chase pirates. Land-lubbers hunt wolves, foxes, badgers, and priests. Why not keep a national pack to hunt attorneys—the *varmint* of varmints—to earth! I awoke myself laughing last night at the notion of any fish, however big and lusty, digesting such a tough 'un. Jonah was a chicken compared to the Devil's Own.

“We must move in equity—whatsomever sort of a craft that is—if the conveyance or some such gig be not produced. But I will try to get one of Holdfast's under-clerks to help me out in proper land language to-morrow.

“SECOND DAY IN COURT.

““Can I recall the dead from the grave which

he made for himself? Can I expect the smooth swindler to rise up in judgment against himself, though he yet escapes the vengeance of the insulted law, and suffers himself to survive his self-convicted colleague?' cried the advocate for the plaintiff. As he warmed with his subject, after my rough but seaworthy evidence, his action was like that of a brave ship roaring through the water and flying over the waves without shipping a single sea. All is open sailing and no breakers ahead. All now believe that the jury, seeing that all the parties ostensibly are Protestants, will find for us—the plaintiff. They rise to give their verdict, and the foreman is opening his mouth. The wind veers round. The judge stands to and throws a broadside into them, which smashes the jury-masts and down they go.

“‘It is,’ remonstrated the grave man—looking out from under his big wig, like a craft under a pressure of top sail—‘my unpleasant duty to remind you, gentlemen of the jury, that as yet you have heard mere assertion, no evidence, no proof.’

“The advocate for the admiral (for such all the loungers about court call me), once more arose amid profound silence and said,

“ ‘ The lamented suicide of the unhappy Mr. Cheat-the-gallows is to us all a subject of the most unfeigned regret, for there is, perhaps, only one other person who could supply such overwhelming evidence in our favour as would establish our claims, even at the sacrifice of the respectable firm of Maysfiend and Co. But, my lord, and you, gentlemen of the jury, must be aware that the material witness whom I have not produced is identified with the party whom his testimony would demolish.’

“ ‘ Here he is,” cried a manly voice, and a passage was made through the crowd. A pale faced middle-aged gentleman, announcing himself ‘ Bernard Bilson,’ with a dreadfully legal-looking packet of neatly-folded papers in his hand, was ushered into the witness-box. The unexpected appearance of the late partner in the noted firm of informers, when he looked around him as an attorney ought to look—unmoved, case-hardened, and indifferent—created a sensation which thrilled the court. He was sworn, and gave his evidence so consistently that nothing could shake it. He had been connected with the firm now implicated in the transaction before the court, but had never been afflicted with their confidence, and had been unconscious

of their frauds, until the suicide of the unhappy Cheat-the-gallows had reduced him to the necessity of examining the vouchers which deceased had, the day before his flight, intrusted to his care. That the frightful disclosures of guilt and crime which the said documents unfolded to his view, induced him instantly, without hesitation, to retire from the business. He produced evidence which, to the mind of the jury, established the fact of the legal transfer to Mr. Benjamin Brown, that is, to myself. It was some time before the tumult could be allayed, and every eye was turned upon Mr. Bilson and your humble servant, after the revelations of the papers, which our Bilson, as I call him, again carefully folded and tied with red tape.

“ Order was once more restored. The learned Advocate for the Crown, or, in point of fact, the pleader for the house of Maysfiend and Co., rose, and, with a sneer of grinning defiance, looking round the court, then addressing himself to the judge, declaimed, ‘ Your observation, my Lord, on the absence of proof on the part of my learned friend on the other side, has conjured up a material witness in the shape of an attorney of the respectable firm which our opponents affect to despise. The practised tone of his

evidence and the technical precision of his answers, gentlemen of the jury, must be so convincing to your intelligent minds, that I am compelled to admit his able and really eloquent testimony remains unassailable. While it betrays the crew embarked in the same boat with him, it unquestionably proves the abstract in Mr. Brown's possession genuine. But where, gentlemen, is there a shadow of proof—an attempt at evidence to show—that the deed of conveyance was ever executed? If it was, where is it? Let it be produced.'

“ ‘Before I sit down, I would ask the honourable witness now on his oath, one question.’ Then vainly attempting to browbeat Mr. Bilson, who, like all lawyers, was triply mailed in brass, the learned speaker solemnly asked him, ‘How, sir, can you, the faithful repository of the deceased gentleman’s confidence, reconcile the part of your belief in his statement to his wife—granting it proved that he intended to embark for America—with your own declaration, and that upon oath, that you never, in your legal life, knew Cheat-the-gallows to tell the truth when a lie would serve his purpose? I do not, sir, accuse you of perjury; but, since you have taught the Court to believe that if the late

gentleman said he *would* go, it was a fair conclusion that he would *not* go to America, how can you, upon your own showing, on such premises, come to your conclusion ?’

“ The judge, referring to his note, much of which I can’t stow away into this letter, reminded the advocate that ‘ these were not the words of Mr. Bilson, though they might admit of the same sense.’

“ ‘ In answer to the learned examiner’s pertinent question, put so triumphantly to me,’ replied the witness in the box, ‘ I reconcile my conclusion with my premises thus :—The wretched individual whom your bitter irony styles “ a gentleman ” only told lies as I distinctly stated when it answered his purpose. But he never, perhaps, told a lie when he was absolutely certain that the truth would effect his object better. Still he so rarely uttered anything but a lie, that for once he told the plain truth, in the hope that all who knew his real character might mistake it for a lie, and thus he deceives his dearest friends, if not the learned advocate to whose challenge I have just responded.’

“ ‘ I will not,’ exclaimed the advocate, ‘ insult the judgment of an enlightened Protestant and British jury at the dawn of the eighteenth cen-

tury, by addressing one word to them on the tissue of sophistry which we have just heard; but I confidently return to the question—where is the evidence, oral, or written? Where is the witness to prove the alleged transaction between the trustees of Robert Strickland on the one part and Benjamin Brown on the other part. Where is——’

“Not another word of the orator could be heard. A loud murmur arose above his voice, swelling gradually louder and still more loud, till all respect for the sacred precincts of the Judgment Hall was lost in the wild tumult. The Chief Baron sternly called on the Sheriff to suppress the uproar. Scarcely was this order given when one thundering shout was raised outside the court, and at the same moment was caught up and echoed through the interior by a hundred voices. They died away.

“ ‘Let them put up their material witness, who can——’

“The remainder of his words were drowned in an uproar like that of the sea, when it meets an opposing current, and like it, too, the great mass surged and swelled, sweeping forward. A rush of sailors from the outer hall, bearing some object on their shoulders, burst through all barriers,

supported as they were on all sides by an overwhelming mass, as by a buttress. All gave way before the shock.

“ Quiet succeeded. A shrill wild shriek pierced with a loud and terrible distinctness the ears of the assembly. All eyes were now turned in the direction of that cry, and instantly rested on a human form, apparently an old woman, who when the world was but a few years younger would have been burned for a witch.

“ ‘ Here I am to tender my evidence,’ she screamed in a paroxysm of excitement. A cry of amazement rent the air, and rang through the crowded court.

“ ‘ Three cheers for the Admiral,’ roared the merry men of the sea.

“ The heaving to and fro of the convulsed and spasmodic body of men pressed forward to the witness’s box under their extraordinary burden. The poor old woman seemed by no means at home in her exalted position, her long flaxen hair streaming profusely in disorder over the necks of the Blue Jackets. Her eyes flashed fire, which strangely lighted up her puckered mouth and wrinkled countenance, as if her whole life was concentrated in her gaze, as she glared at the judge. She was no sooner lifted

into the box for the witness than she sank into a stupor, induced by the excitement which she had undergone, and for several minutes could not get out a word. At last she desperately regained her legs. Her statement was short and earnest. She took the oath, and deposed that she was the widow of the late Mr. Cheat-the-gallows. 'Poor dear thing!' she plaintively sighed, 'he was a good man at heart, but was made a fool and a tool of by soapy Maysfiend—the smooth-skinned villain! He wore two faces under a hood and a fair outside. He made my husband what he was, poor dear, dear thing! deceitful to the last.' She sobbed. And here—as the Orange counsel afterwards recited,

‘Before her face her handkerchief she spread,
To hide the flood of tears she did—not shed.’

“ ‘I have been sold up to pay the rent of our house, and as bad luck would have it, in the poor thing’s drawers, I mean his *chest* of drawers, there was a secret drawer, and in that secret drawer the purchaser discovered a hat full of hard cash in gold, besides sundry parchments which he made no account of, but gave them to his wife to cover down her jam pots. But the season for preserves had not arrived. The case was tried. It went against me. The treasure

trove, as the cheating judge (I beg your honour's pardon, my lord) directed the jury to find for the finder, was awarded to my neighbour, a mere clod-crushing bumpkin as he is. I only desired the fellow to let me have the bits of sheep-skin for the sake of the poor dear thing that was gone, that I might have them for a keep-sake.'

"Here she was interrupted by the counsellor for the Crown. 'Pray, Madam,' he asked in his blandest accents, with a sweet winning smile, 'was this before the reward for the recovery of the imaginary deed was offered?' The judge called him to order, observing that the question was irrelevant, and she ran on:— 'The offer of the reward of £500 had not yet come to the ears of the purchaser. He could not spare the skins, he declared; but rather than let me break my heart he would sell them to me for £100. This sum I borrowed from a knowing one on the strength of my chance, and here is the deed in question,' cried she, in ecstasy, handing it to Mr. Holdfast, who put it into the hands of the counsel for me.

"The old woman, you see, honoured Sir, is a regular trump. We have taken our verdict, which was unanimous in our favour. I—Ben

Brown—am in legal possession. The judge shook me heartily by both hands. The long-robed gentlemen congratulated me. The foreman of the jury asked me to dinner. The crowd cheered me as ‘the fortunate admiral.’ My jolly comrades, who came from Kent to witness the proceedings, carried me off in triumph.

“The agents of Maysfiend, by his direction, removed Mrs. Cheat-the-gallows to a room under their offices, as they said, to make her comfortable for life. The plausible gentleman himself was waiting the result of the trial in a room on the ground floor, which he occupied generally during his London business in the law courts. His junior clerk was now with him.

“The lawyer’s clerk who gave you the yarn on the upper deck is under weigh for his anchorage in the Strand, and my head is all of a whirl, like a ship in the maelstrom. We are all to make a night of it—easy come, easy go—and oceans of grog. One hundred pounds will scarcely clear us out of harbour. Oh, my head! It will stand it no longer. But I must lie to till I see Captain Holdfast to-morrow.

“ THIRD DAY.

“ Holdfast's clerk is here, and is shuddering with horror at what he has witnessed.

“ There is an immense crowd before Maysfiend's room door, under which a dark stream of blood is bubbling out into the street, where there is a puddle of gore. We all thought the convicted wretch had murdered himself like his poor dupe. But on bursting open the door, the officers of justice found the body of a woman. It was the widow Cheat-the-gallows drenched in her blood and murdered—as dead as twenty door-nails. Maysfiend is in great distress for her fate, and declares that he left her in company with his junior clerk the preceding night. The poor fellow was quietly writing to his mother in an upper chamber which he usually occupied when he was apprehended. He bears a blameless character and was highly respected by all who knew him, and they were many.

“ The collected masses, as one man, are convulsed with sensation. They all declare their belief in the poor young man's innocence. He had, they say, often relieved the woman who is murdered, in her calamity. All deeply sympathise with him, and say that even the suspicion of the crime laid to his charge will break his

heart and be the death of his mother : for he is her only son, and she is a widow. But I must put in an oar with my own hand to coil up the yarn :—

“ Holdfast will be towed astern of our craft out of port this evening. If we have a fair wind and a safe voyage we shall drop anchor at Aston in the course of a few days.—In the meantime and ever, Honoured Sir, I am yours to command,

BENJAMIN BROWN.

“ For the hands of the worthy Major Robert Strickland.”

CHAPTER LII.

Farewell, my home, my home no longer now ;
Witness of many a calm and happy day ;
And thou, fair eminence, upon whose brow
Dwells the last sunshine of the evening ray.

· · · · ·
Farewell my home, where many a day has past
In joys, whose loved remembrance long shall last.

Southey.

WHEN Holdfast and honest Ben Brown arrived at Aston Manor House, there was only enough of it left to contain the indispensable household of the proprietor and the guests, who took up their abode here, until the recovered estates in the north of England were legally settled upon the rightful heirs. All was soon explained, promised, understood, and finally arranged. The generous sailor declined any formal and binding beneficial interest for himself in the transactions in which his name was so conspicuous.

The remaining few days which Strickland spent at Aston were bright with hope, and happy—very happy. He would ramble over the green lawns and through the shady groves of the park, sometimes thinking over past perils

and terrible adventures with a melancholy pleasure ; sometimes looking forward to the end of his trials, and the fulfilment of his prayers and his wishes. His mind was in harmony with the sequestered solitudes of the wolds, and often did he wonder how the owner of Aston could abandon it for ever. Then he would revert involuntarily to what concerned himself most nearly, and reckon the days he must be still absent from the spot blessed by the presence of Mary. Was it possible for a letter from him to reach her before his arrival at St. Germain's ? No. His host had determined to hasten to France the earliest moment he could escape from business.

Their last visit in the neighbourhood was to Plowden's good friend Shrewsbury, who had been recently rewarded with a dukedom and the garter for his services to William.

After an agreeable ride, they arrived at the ducal residence, secluded in the wolds. His grace received Colonel Plowden, with whom he was evidently intimate, with affectionate warmth. But there was something ineffably plaintive, nay, melancholy, in his voice, his face, and manner.

He had heard of Strickland's gallantry in the

battle-field, as well as of the restored estates, and congratulated him on both.

“If you have ambition, Major Strickland,” said the duke, “be consistent, and never let it wound your conscience or invade your happiness. I once was little less devoted to the Stuarts than you are.”

Here His Grace was much affected, and endeavoured to conceal the feelings into which the sight of the two brave loyalists had betrayed him.

“Your Grace has power and wealth; the favour of the king (for such, though a non-juror, I must call him); and the ‘otium cum dignitate.’ You are the idol of the Whigs; you are not personally disliked by any of the Tories; and by some of us you must ever be highly esteemed. In no other position but that which Your Grace seems to deplore could you have so materially served your now grateful friends, from whom politics only sever you. To your noble and disinterested intercession we owe the restoration of Aston. For no other, perhaps, would William have conceded so much to a Jacobite.”

“To one, at least, he would have granted even a greater favour,” rejoined the duke, with

an arch smile, like a sunbeam struggling through a cloud. "Nor must I arrogate to myself the merit justly due to the beautiful lady of William's Lord Chamberlain—her ladyship whom you wot of."

A change, approaching a blush, passed over the countenance of Plowden—at least, so it appeared to Strickland.

The duke, avoiding further allusion to the immediate interests of his visitor, fell back upon himself: "My conscience accuses me," said he, pensively, "at times. The praises of William and of his lords sound in my ears like reproaches. Yet, it was only at the urgent request of the king himself that I accepted the seals of office. I suppose he wished to test my fidelity to him.

About this time, six years ago, his Majesty deviated from his route through Gloucestershire, and did me the honour to dine with me here. He was gracious, but thoughtful and dejected, as if he desired more kingdoms to conquer, or was afraid of losing the realms he had won. He is certainly no friend to Papists, as we call you," continued His Grace; "still, your position in England as Catholics is better than it appears. You have still much to bind you together and

to inspire you with courage—your own family—your first and your only faith. The monuments of the old Religion in the land of your persecution are witnesses of the past and prophets of the future.”

“The people of England will one day make their voices heard,” said Colonel Plowden. “I mean the vast, increasing, and organised masses of the people—that voice, ‘vox populi, vox Dei,’ and if not that voice, the physical strength of the many will be strong enough to sweep away slowly, and, therefore, surely, one by one all the wrongs of which we have cause to complain; and when toleration pervades the land, and all other religious penalties are removed, those inflicted on Catholics will be swept away in the general torrent of popular feeling. An irresistible combination of circumstances, and the will of the people, rather than the wish or policy of any particular minister, will bring about a change far more wonderful than the Revolution. Even the cry of ‘no Popery’ will be drowned by the loud voices of the nations.”

“God bless you,” says the nervous and sensitive duke; “long may you enjoy the solace of an approving conscience, and your recovered possessions!”

He wished them a hurried farewell, and retired from observation.

On their return to Aston, which the owner, as well as his friend, was about soon to leave for ever, how familiar was everything about the dear old place to Colonel Plowden! There, stood the groups of venerable trees on either side of the avenue. They had lived on from heir to heir. As their branches waved to and fro in the wind they seemed to upbraid him—"Thou art returned only to look on us, and forsake us. Ah! why shouldst thou leave the abode of thy fathers desolate."

The plaintive notes of the wood pigeon seemed to mourn his intended departure. The hoarse cawing of the rooks returning to their rest, as they settled on the trees, came fraught with the well-remembered voice of earlier days. The babbling of the brook, whose banks were the favourite haunts of his childhood, awoke Remembrance with her busy train of pleasures past, of present pains. The little world of the boy, and the scenes of a gone day, silently spoke to his heart of the tranquil seclusion of his father's house, which he had but too early exchanged for the tempest and the tumult of public life. "There," says he, pointing regret-

fully to a mound crowned with oak trees, "I used to sit with my brothers in the holidays, and talk over our recreations. And now," sighed the possessor, "as the shades of life are settling on me, I am to leave this spot for ever."

A sudden turn in the avenue opened to them a view of all that was left of the ancestral manor house. The gaunt remains of the mutilated building stood stern and solitary, like the last band of the brave amid the battle-field where their comrades have fallen. The gentlemen entered the wing which brooded over the ruins beneath. They compared their own destiny with that of the duke, and were perfectly satisfied with their lot. They passed a quiet evening, and "took sweet counsel together as friends," resolving to set out the next day for St. Germain.

On the fifth day after their departure from Aston the two officers entered the well-wooded park of St. Germain.

While they were eagerly ascending that noble terrace which looks down on the vale of the Seine, the slanting beams of the evening sun were shining pleasantly on wood and water, hill and valley, pouring their late lovely rays through

the avenues and glades of the park. Fleecy clouds were chasing one another across the sky, like the young exiles who at that hour were seen pursuing each other through the grounds of the château—the face of the landscape varying with alternate light and shadow. At one moment the declining sun of early autumn was veiled in a pavilion of gold and silver clouds, at another bursting forth in his unclouded glory, gilding in his brilliant hues, the western sides of the trees, and making their leaves, as they trembled in the breeze, sparkle like diamonds. Over the mind of our hero passed feelings as chequered as the landscape, and as rapidly succeeding each other as the flitting cloud and glancing sunshine. He was safe. He was drawing very near her who reigned in his heart, through every clime, at every time, and whose image was before him. He had returned to claim her as his own. The happiness, however, of the loyalist and the lover was not without alloy. The destiny of the Royal family was sad indeed, and those of the household might be involved in their ruin. At the same time the travelling companions rejoiced in the belief, that as the bodily strength of the king failed, his faith grew brighter, and his disposi-

tions, now under the influence of Grace, were preparing the sinking monarch for a passage to Glory. As the sun beamed the more brightly as he sank to his rest—so the king in his descent to the grave showed a more cheerful and happy countenance, beaming brightly with hope. His patience and example of piety were shedding a hallowed influence on all around him.

Such, at least, were the reflections of the two good Catholics who believed that the patience of James was only equalled by his bodily infirmities and trials. As the lingering pulse of quivering light darted its still glowing rays over the scene on which day's blazing orb was about to set in harmony with earth in the reflection of heaven—so, in the heart of the dying monarch, after the heat and burden of his fevered day, every pulse “beat time to airs divine,” cheering his weary spirit through the dark valley of the shadow of death; bestowing on those whom he was leaving behind the bright lustre of his example and the influences of his sanctity.

The mellowed beauty and pensive charms of the setting sun of the declining year tinged the landscape like hope flushing over the future,

towards the close of man's life. And oh ! how consoling—how transporting was the thought of spending the rest of his existence with her who alone could make life delightful to Strickland. For him she had suffered much and waited long, and when she thought he was dead she had mourned for him with more than the grief of a sister. He almost feared that the prized object of his affections would, by some sad and wondrous providence, elude his embrace or recede from his approach ; or, that if he were permitted once more to press her to his heart, the very intensity of her love and her joy, after so many long years of separation, would be more than she could endure. He felt all this and a vast deal more ; for although a great change had passed over him since he was first presented to the reader (a full dozen years younger, and about a thousand pages earlier in our record of his history)—although experience and reverses of fortune, active service, hardship, and harsh schooling of the world, had subdued and chastened the ardent fires of youth, giving decision to his character—though his noble and now martial face, his broad forehead already furrowed by a line, the index of a thoughtful if not anxious mind, his whole countenance suf-

fused with the dark tint of wind and weather—announced the man in whom it would be difficult to recognise the youthful page of Whitehall; yet, the first warm love of his boyhood survived every vicissitude and every other feeling of his heart. It grew with his growth—it strengthened with his strength—through every change and every trial.

And now the travellers were in sight of the borrowed palace. They were talking freely about many things; but while Robert gave that outward attention which courtesy demands, his thoughts were turned inward to his own absorbing interests—his meeting with the sister of his childhood. He felt the loveliness of nature, he marked the changes of many an object, especially in the shrubs and trees, since he looked upon them last, drawing from all the scene the blessed image of the happy destiny which Heaven had ordained for him and Mary. The distant sound of the vesper rose above the gurgling of fountains and the last song of the grove. The flowers breathed perfumes in the cool of the evening. All seemed to call man from the beauties of this earth to contemplate the glories of heaven. But however sublime may be the images which invite us, we are at every step of

our pilgrimage reminded of sin and suffering within us or around us. So now, accompanied by the two visitors while we approach the splendid abode of affliction and the dreadful tragedy of real life, we must leave the creations of fiction and fancy outside. To obtrude one word of romance into the sanctuary dedicated to affectionate grief would be to desecrate a scene sacred to the heart which "knoweth its own bitterness, and with which a stranger intermeddleth not." At the very best the ornaments of language could only weaken the force and impair the true idea of what was passing within the Château of St. Germain. Have we not hideous Death within our view, "retaining but a quantity of life?" The ugly monster has already knocked at the door of the palace. How feeble, then, is the tongue, how unequal the pen, even of a ready writer, to describe the heartrending scene of woe within that foreign court!

When Colonel Plowden entered the house of mourning—for such it was by anticipation—in order to prepare his daughter for the unexpected return of her loved one, who to her had been dead and was now alive again, every countenance which the fond father observed told but too plainly of the king's approaching end. He

entered the chamber of the monarch, who at the moment was unconscious, and whose pale, anxious consort—England's once beautiful queen—was bending over her poor husband's couch, her eyes resting in fond, sad solicitude on his face, or turning with appealing glances from him to the physician in attendance, and with mute eloquence asking whether there was still hope. But her silent pleading brought no answer of comfort. The tide of the king's life was ebbing fast, and, judging from the deathlike and melancholy expression of the queen's countenance, Colonel Plowden feared, she could not survive her beloved husband very long. She seemed indifferent to every one but him whom she watched with unceasing gaze. To all present it was a crisis of solemn interest and deep concern.

The days of William were also drawing to a close, and that most certain. His maladies were incurable.

No sooner did the eye of the queen, as it wandered from one friend to another, catch a sight of Plowden, than she attempted to greet him with a kind welcome ; but in the attempt, her Majesty, overpowered by contending emotions of fears for her husband and hopes for her son, as

his successor, sank fainting into the arms of Mary Plowden, who was by her side, but who, at the sudden appearance of her father, was so startled and overjoyed, that she could with difficulty support herself. By a strong effort it was that she sustained the weight of the queen, and composed and restored her to consciousness. The monarch, though unconcerned for himself, was aroused from his reverie by the noise of the queen's attendants rendering her assistance. He looked anxiously around, and his eye, too, rested on Plowden.

“Have you, my dear friend,” he asked, in faltering accents, “come to see me before I die? I rejoice,” continued he, “to see so many well known faces, before my eyes are closed in death, and yet I grieve for the calamities which their faithfulness to me has entailed upon my loyal, true, friends. May God’s grace enable you to endure with patience what we cannot remedy or prevent. You see when death lowers the head, the monarch as well as the poorest of his subjects, can oppose nothing to the stroke but resignation. We all have some need,” he continued, in a tone so weak that it could only be heard by those near him, “of some little leisure for a preparation for the mysterious journey

which I am called to make. Oh! my friends, it cannot be deferred—it cannot be repeated. You know the greatest knights of old laid aside their helmets, and kings their crowns, for the monastic habit and the cloister. How merciful is God to allow me to die remote from the tumult of the camp and the temptations of my court!” Then, looking at the military officers round him, he continued, “Your greatest blessing is some interval for serious reflection between the life of a soldier and his death. Oh! that I could feel as if nothing existed in the universe but God and my own soul! Still, if it be God’s will, I could wish to survive my nephew for the sake of my son.”

Utterly exhausted, he sank prostrate into his former state of stupor. In the meantime, with the leave of the queen, on whom several of her ladies were now in attendance, Colonel Plowden led his daughter from the sick chamber to the apartment in which he had left Strickland.

Scarcely were the first fond embraces between the father and the daughter over, when Mary, as they hastened along a corridor, perceiving that the Colonel was hesitating as if in doubt of what he ought to say, smiled

plaintively, and approaching him with another tender embrace besought him to tell her all he knew.

“Speak out, my dearest father,” she implored, “for anything is better than this suspense. If you cannot speak with any hope, you have nothing to fear for me; I have long been, and still am prepared for the worst, for sure I am that as he was noble in his life so he was honourable in his death.”

“But can you, my dear girl,” asked the parent, anxiously, “assure yourself and me that you are equally prepared for the best?”

“My heart has so long, so often, and so mournfully realized the death of our beloved Robert that any tidings of his restoration to us would come to me as the expression of kind wishes intended to alleviate my sorrows—were the unexpected tidings of his life confirmed, such a miracle might be too much for me; unless, indeed,” she added with a faint blush, “he himself were present to sustain me.”

“You could then meet him, in fact,” said the father, as he delayed on their passage to Strickland’s temporary resting place.

“My father,” cried the agitated maiden, “*you* cannot surely deceive me. Is he yet alive?”

“Let us go and see,” replied the father, playfully.

She looked her very soul into her father's countenance, and in it read even more than his words declared. She clung more closely to his arm almost killed in the conflict between fear and hope—that kind of suffocating sensation which overpowers us when some great fact which we had ceased to think possible is accomplished. Learning from her father's manner that the delightful result, so many years hidden in darkness, was at length evolved by time, she entreated him to make no further delay.

Robert was waiting alone in silent expectation in a retired room of the château, when the door opened and before him stood, or rather hung in tremulous emotion on her father's arm, the beautiful and matured woman, whom he had never ceased to love, even from early childhood, from whom the wars had cruelly torn him long, long ago. A great change had evidently passed over her—the rosebud had only opened into perfection, to fade. Thought was on her countenance deepening into care. Yet during the protracted absence of her lover, according to his parting request, she diverted her grief by all which was beautiful in nature, or admirable in

art. It was only what is called society—the heartless society of the world—that is, the court, which she avoided. It must be confessed that eight years of such a life had marked but too distinctly the difference between the tender girl and the ripened full grown woman. The first fair bloom of sweet childhood had passed into the pale, placid, and pensive look of one older in sorrow than in years. Her figure, though of course more developed, was even slighter, and her whole person and expression had assumed that delicate mould in which reside mental energy and intellectual power—the conquerors of body—qualities which are seldom or, perhaps, never discovered in the plump, blushing, beauty of charming eighteen. Age could not wither her, because “the hand that made her fair had made her good.” “Her voice was soft, gentle and low” at all times; now it failed her altogether and sank back as it were in dying cadence upon her own heart. She looked upon her lover. His fond gaze met hers. Each was startled at the apparition; for as “all men think all men mortal but themselves” so we think all changed but ourselves.

“Robert!” “Mary!” were the only words that either could utter for several minutes.

Mary turned one wondering look upon her father and fell fainting into Robert's arms.

"God bless you, my children," said the affectionate Colonel, as he hurriedly wiped a tear from his eyes.

Her hand, as it fell into her lover's, trembled. He pressed his lips upon it. Her bosom now heaved against his heart, and, while it betrayed her emotion, gave a promise of returning strength. Her look was still bent upon him, but it had more of softness and affection in it than surprise. Once more her lips murmured again her lover's name.

At length with a strong effort she exclaimed, "Thank heaven! he is safe! he is here!"

Each felt restored to the most valued half of existence. Her hands were willing captives, surrendered to his clasp. Her cheek, to which the long banished blush returned, was close to his; for she was clothed in spotless chastity. Both being conscious of their purity—were blended—two immortal spirits into one.

"Robert, my own dear Robert!" she cried. "How, in heaven's name, came you hither and from what quarter? Your presence is to me as the resurrection from the grave."

"I came from our own native land, to bring

you good tidings, to comfort you, to make you happy, to realise the fond hopes of our childhood, to make you at once and for ever my own," was the answer.

"For seven long years," she said, "I have mourned for you as for the dead."

"And twice seven years," rejoined Strickland, "I have served for you beneath the mid-day sun and the chilling frosts of night. Oh! how frequently have I expected, covered with glory, to return from the wars to join you once more! but as often as the phantom of bliss passed within my view, so frequently it glided from my grasp; or I was driven farther from the object which I prized—one day was bright, and promised my return; another darkly shrouded my pleasant prospect. The horrors of war gathered round the Royal army again, and the clouds were lowering round me."

"And I," the happy maiden rejoined, "in my hours of solitude and musing have followed you in my thoughts, through many a dreary march, even into the heart of the battle-field. In spirit I have triumphed with you in your victories of which I had heard, in which I longed, but was forbidden to share. Gladly would I have walked with you along that rough path which my sex denied me :

I could not escape from you, I was haunted by you or your ghost," she said, archly. "My mind still fled back like an unstrung bow to its former position, and sprang back to the same image. Sometimes I saw you as the fair page, sometimes as the splendid officer of the Life Guards, but never in the fulness of matured manhood as I see you now, if indeed, I really *do* see the same man whom I admired and loved as a boy. I can even at this moment scarcely believe my eyes or my ears. My heart rather than my memory recognizes you. So deeply," she continued, "had I been persuaded of your fall, when Sarsfield was mortally wounded by your side, and whose death seemed not less certain than your own, that since the battle of Landen I have only waited the queen's good pleasure to retire from the world in which I had nothing left worth living for. Only yesterday I was actually deliberating with my mother on becoming a nun. Nothing but your most marvellous arrival at the very moment when my fate was in the balance, could have won me back again or turned the scale.

"Sorrow," responded Strickland, "may, my heart's dear Mary, 'abide for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'"

“Truly,” cried the bride elect, “the long term of our separation was night—black, melancholy night; but our meeting is day—glad, beautiful day.”

Their happiness was too intense for further converse. A silent pause, more eloquent than spoken words, ensued. They wept for joy. Yes, tears found their way to the manly soldier's eyes—not of weak tenderness, but the tears of the brave and the strong—of soul-subduing gratitude to God for the fulfilment of long-cherished hopes, the answer to many prayers, and for happiness beyond his brightest anticipations.

The reunited lovers talked over the past and the future, touching but lightly on the present. Of the past and the present the reader knows so much that he will not be tempted to listen to what was said with reference to either. The future he can best imagine. Allowing them, therefore, to unburden their hearts to each other on topics naturally only interesting to themselves, we shall leave them to their own free and unrestrained communion of sentiment, while we return with Colonel Plowden to the sick chamber of King James.

CHAPTER LIII.

His overthrow heap'd happiness upon him ;
For then, and not till then, he felt himself
And found the blessedness of being little :
And to add greater honours to his age
Than man could give him, he died fearing God.

Shakspeare.

COLONEL PLOWDEN found the king in the darkest hour of his trial, surrounded by his friends, like the inferior trees round the majestic oak when it is riven by the thunderbolt.

The dying monarch was calm and composed, but his lips were pale and his cheeks tinged with the livid hues of death. His whole appearance was enough to shock the stoutest heart. The fresh gush of hæmorrhage, which had just with great difficulty been stopped, had left him more dead than alive. He was prostrate but resigned. He expressed a wish, as soon as he was able again to speak, to receive the last rites of the Church, but asked to see his children first, and sent for his son. The young prince, when he entered the chamber, shocked at the death-like

countenance of his father and the bed all drenched in blood, burst into a cry of grief which moved all but the king himself to tears. The father, with difficulty, stretched out his arms to embrace his sorrowing son, whom he addressed with a fervor and solemnity that, in his weak state, astonished everyone, especially Colonel Plowden and all who stood close to the royal couch.

“I am now, my dear boy,” said the king, earnestly, to his son, “leaving this world, which has been to me a sea of storms and tempests, it being God Almighty’s will to wean me from it by many great afflictions. Serve Him with all your power, and never put the crown of England in competition with your eternal salvation. There is no slavery like sin—no liberty like God’s service. If His holy Providence shall think fit to seat you on the throne of your royal ancestors, govern your people with justice and clemency. Remember, kings are not made for themselves, but for the good of the people. Set before their eyes, in your own actions, a pattern of all manner of virtues: consider them as your children. You are the child of vows and prayers, behave yourself accordingly. Honour your mother, that your days may be

long; and be always a kind brother to your dear sister that you may reap the blessings of concord and unity."

When those about his Majesty fearing that further exertion would be too much for him, and that the prince who was only about thirteen years old would give way to his agonised feelings, suggested that the child should withdraw; the poor father was troubled, and said, "Do not take my son away from me till I have given him at least my blessing.

"The chain," he told his son, "which binds earth to heaven begins from earliest youth. Now, my little lad, is your season for receiving meekly good instruction, so that religion may strike deep root in the soul, and the Gospel seed produce a hundred-fold. It is in the spring time of life we must plant good habits, that thus they may bear flowers in summer and fruit in autumn. Your youth is the hope of religion in England! May God Almighty bless you, and deliver you from the sins and the sorrows which have afflicted your father."

He then called for the little princess. She was the child of his old age—the brightest joy of his dark wintry days. He had named her *La Consolatrice* when he first looked upon her;

and she had, even in her nurse's arms, showed the most wonderful affection for him. She was one of the most beautiful children in the world, and her abilities were infinitely higher than those of the prince, her brother.

It was, perhaps, a harder trial for James to part with his daughter than with his son. She was brought to the bedside of her dying father, bathed in tears, to receive, in her turn, all that James could give—a father's blessing and advice. Young as she was, she understood only too well the sad state of her dear father, and the calamity that hung over her.

“Adieu, my dear child,” said James; “serve your Creator in the days of your youth; look on virtue as the greatest ornament of your sex and rank; follow close the steps of that great pattern of it, your mother, who has been, no less than myself, overclouded with calumnies; but Time, the mother of Truth, will, I hope, at last make her virtues shine as bright as the sun.”

The dear little girl shrank from the horrid sight of gore and the ghastly approaches of death. And yet she clung to her father. Her infant horror of the sight was only mastered by her affection. For so young a child the conflict of such feelings was extraordinary. She looked

like some bright angel of light in the dark region of death.

“Adieu, once more, my own dear cherub.” He faintly smiled, or rather tried to smile.

All who heard the dying monarch, like the holy patriarch of old, devoutly bless his children, were deeply impressed with every word he said.

“Already,” said some, standing apart from the bed, who heard his allusion to the queen, “have her enemies been confuted and confounded.”

“The prediction, in its fulness,” cried Berwick, “will be fulfilled.” Then turning to the king said,

“The railing accusations brought against this poor queen are proofs of the baseness of the persons who made them, and are the very strongest evidences of her worth.”

The king, being more painfully sensitive of every report, or praise, or censure which touched the queen than of his own character, was, though apparently asleep, evidently conscious of the remarks of his affectionate and dutiful son Berwick. “If,” said he, “we have prized the praises of the world as our reward, we shall be disappointed here, and still more unhappy in the world to come. Regard them not, my friends; ‘For

how much soever each one is in the eyes of God, so much is he, and no more,' as St. Francis hath it."

Feeling that the king was still interested in what was passing around him, Colonel Plowden observed to Berwick, who was standing near him, that,

"Great indeed must be the sinner who could reasonably hope for the praises or even the mercy of those whom neither the sacred ties of nature nor the laws of humanity could influence or restrain."

"True, too true, indeed," observed Powis, who at that moment was retiring with the weeping prince, and who held high rank among his brother exiles. "Her most unnatural enemies measure the queen's conduct and character by the standard of their own dispositions. They cannot understand how it is, that the gifts of our dear lady the queen's heart and mind rise higher and higher and come out now more brightly than during the palmiest days of her prosperity."

"Little did we think," said the Duke of Berwick, "when his Majesty held a Chapter of the Garter just before the battle of La Hogue, and admitted you and our little prince to that order, that we should so soon see my royal

father die so peacefully amid domestic comforts in the bosom of his family."

Than Powis there was no more eminent member of the English aristocracy, and considering that he had been elevated recently to the title of a duke, he was as little disliked by his countrymen as they disliked any conspicuous papist. Their Graces Berwick and Powis, with their duchesses, were constant in their attendance on the dying monarch. Lord O'Brian Clare; also our young friend the Hon. O'Brian, his son, with a young lady who bore a striking resemblance to Powis, resting on his arm, were in the ducal group. The two young people were absorbed in such deep conversation, that they seemed to be all in all to each other. A sort of little world apart, within themselves. They seemed by their manner to be pouring into each other's bosom every thought as it arose, without the slightest reference to what was going on around them. The lady was listening with eager pleasure to the handsome, animated and well-bred officer, whose easy manners and graceful courtesy seemed rather an heritage than an acquirement. She looked much younger than he, and her woman's young, gentle heart seemed to render an involuntary tribute of admiration to

the national traits and romantic sentiments of the dashing Irishman. The Lady Jane Powis, for she was no other than the daughter of Powis, was to all appearance less thoughtful than Mary Plowden, but in the estimation of those who professed skill in the science of female beauty she was more symmetrically perfect and more generally admired at first sight. For anything half so beautiful as her features you might search the world in vain. The wreath of brilliants mingling with her dark brown hair scarcely matched in lustre the hazel eye, which a light brown eyebrow pencilled with exquisite delicacy, and long eyelashes of the same colour, shaded. The white pearls of her necklace—a true love token from her partner—was not more purely beautiful than her teeth; her complexion was as fair, excepting the blush of pleasure that now suffused her countenance with a slight shade of crimson. Judging from her joyous manner her mind was by no means in harmony with the scene around her. She seemed glad to emerge from the chamber into the open air, and accordingly, with her companion, soon left the apartment unobserved, while the Pope's nuncio attracted general attention as he testified by his presence the sad

loss which the Church was about to sustain by the approaching death of the king. The royal penitent rejoiced that in his last extremity he could make his profession of faith to the holy father's representative, and expressed his gratitude when the nuncio promised to remain with him while his Majesty lived.

“But of all men to whom I am indebted there is none to whom I owe so much as to the Prince of Orange. By taking from me three crowns he has put me in a way to purchase one infinitely more precious than all of them,” said his Britannic Majesty.

According to an English MS. written by the Rev. F. Sanders, London, 1704, King James preserved throughout a full and entire understanding, and gave fresh and incessant proofs of his piety, contrition and faith. For his own family's spiritual welfare he evinced the deepest concern. But he did not confine his death-bed advice to them alone. He affectionately exhorted his servants and friends to forsake sin and to lead holy lives. Many—especially those who had been in long attendance on him and the queen, he personally recognised.

There were, however, some whom he seemed to miss, for his eye wandered from one person to

another round the room, then seemed restless and dissatisfied. He motioned the queen to his pillow and said something to her in a whisper, and relapsed once more into a state of exhaustion; one of her ladies moved to Mrs. Plowden, who immediately left the room, and in a few minutes returned accompanied by Robert and Mary. As they entered, many had retired some distance from the bed, and not a few had altogether left the room. All was hushed and solemn; not a sound was heard but the deep low voice of the Prior Curate of St. Germain's, who had entered bearing the most Holy Sacrament, and was now putting those awful questions to the king on the heart's answer to which so much depended.

"Yes, I believe; I believe it with all my heart," was the reply.

The bystanders were moved, and wept at the ardour and lively faith with which the answer was pronounced. Through all the holy rites his mind went with the priest. The first words of his royal master which reached Strickland's ear were these: "I die a child of the Roman Catholic Church."

Among several subjects of gratitude for which the monarch, after Holy Communion, thanked

God, were those which, on their approach to his bed, Mary and Robert distinctly heard James offering up thus : “ For having opened my eyes to let me know the true religion ; for having touched my heart to the quick with repentance for my sins. I am obliged to own that by my sins I have justly deserved these afflictions.” Having again and again thanked God for the inestimable consolation of the Viaticum, he continued, “ Thou art my refuge in the day of tribulation.” The Curé was still by the bed listening with delight to the pious ejaculations of his dying penitent. Many of the clergy were present ; but one was not. Father Warner had gone to his rest. Many of all ranks had died during their exile. But still the sick room and many others in the palace were crowded with officers of the army and civilians of every rank and degree in James’s service. The hoary-headed general—the stout captain of infantry—the colonel of cavalry—every accent, —every look that marks each trait of national character in Great Britain represented the loyalty of three countries—the adherence of the native and reserved Scotchman—the laughter-loving Patlander, subdued by grief into sadness — the solid and fair-haired Saxon — besides

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French nobles, Italian emissaries, Spanish sympathisers, and various representatives of other countries—were at St. Germain.

The lamenting loyalists collected in groups, talked eagerly together, while those most interested in the destiny of the royal family approached much nearer to the presence of their dying king. All eyes were turned to his bed, or rested more sorrowfully on the afflicted queen. And never, perhaps, did woman in this bad world of woe, persevere in greater patience to Heaven's will. She kissed the hand that chastened her. She struggled to be cheerful, or at least to wear a cheerful aspect for the sake of the king. Her affectionate heart could only rest on the bosom of him whom the more he suffered the more she loved. He had only learnt to love her with an undivided fondness when he was called to leave her. She pondered on the bereavement which awaited her.

At no period of history, from the Norman Conquest to the present day, has such a virtuous and charitable queen adorned the throne of Great Britain, and at the same time discharged so lovingly all the domestic duties of private life, as Mary Beatrice of Modena, unless it be our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria, the repre-

sentative of the elder branch of the same illustrious stock of Guelph of the Italian line of Este. In the endearing relationships of wife and mother there are many traits in the character of Mary of Modena which remind us of the dispositions and conjugal affection of our own beloved Sovereign.

Mary was an example to her subjects which shed a hallowed influence from the court to the cottage.—So is our reigning Queen—

“ It seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion, which, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.
Patience and sorrow strove
Which should express her goodliest.”

The only passion which she could not conquer was a rebel-like anguish for the husband whom she mourned.

In like manner our present queen, unmoved by all other griefs, yields only to the deathless sorrow which afflicts her for the royal Consort of whom she is bereaved.

Mary Beatrice turned her imagination to a thousand ways of raising her son to the throne which his father had lost, and after all she felt that she must soon be but a poor Italian lady, exiled and alone.

Doubtless, there were those present in the crowd of observers whose object was the interest of William : whatever might be their private sympathy with the deposed family, their estimation of the fallen king and queen would naturally be very different from that of the adherents of the Stuarts. Indeed, different minds will receive different impressions from the same events. We all vary in our estimate of an historical personage according to the degree of interest which we personally feel in his career and in his end.

It has throughout these pages been the object of the writer to let each actor presented to the reader, speak in his own natural way, according to his own peculiar prejudices, interests, or say judgment, without comment on his sentiments. In no instance, to our knowledge, have we suffered Fiction to usurp the throne of History or invade the interests of Truth, by which, if we have succeeded in our design, our story is regulated and ruled.

The character of James II. has often been portrayed in that dark colouring, which but too correctly shades the character of his predecessors of the same family—especially that of James I. The vices of the last James's youth are widely

published and proclaimed, while the sanctity, the penitence, and the beauty of his example in the evening of his life and in the hour of his death are set down simply to superstition.

How far the event of final conquests instead of reverses, might have changed the drama of Great Britain, or influenced the history of James as victor, we cannot say. But to this all will agree—that a man's merit is generally measured by the amount of his success.

We should be careful how we charge the memory of the dead with anything not absolutely proved in evidence against them during their life. Had James and his devoted queen died before they openly repelled the gross and groundless allegations of their enemies, black must have been the page of history handed down to us by Bp. Gilbert Burnet and his admirers, Titus Oates, his pupil, William Fuller, and the founders of the school of false witnesses.

To try an ill-guided monarch in a court where he can no longer plead, and that before a jury, whose verdict we can anticipate—selected by ourselves and ready to pronounce a sentence against which the dead king cannot appeal, is no proof of our own justice.

To the character of the Great Monarch, the

munificent benefactor of James and his family, History seems to be less severe.

Even at the close of our tale we find Louis XIV. unrivalled in power as well as in royal generosity. At the dawn of the eighteenth century his influence over Europe was only less supreme than the sway of Napoleon the First at the beginning of the nineteenth century. But while the provinces won by the Imperial Corsican were wrested again from France within twenty years of the earliest date of their accession, and while France is said to be scarcely stronger by a city, for the conquests of the Consulate, she retains the extended boundaries which Louis XIV. added to her dominions. To his reign, among many other great benefits which he left to the civilized world is ascribed the origin of the great Exhibition of Arts, which has recurred through subsequent ages down to the present time till it suggested the idea of the grand Exhibition which was organised and developed in the Crystal Palace of Sir Joseph Paxton in 1851, which on a still more extended scale is now held in France in 1867.

Louis had passed his youth and manhood of triumph. "Nine times," says an eloquent writer, "since the sun of that monarch rose had the papal

chair received a new occupant. Six sovereigns had reigned over the Ottoman hordes. The fourth emperor, since the birth of the same era, bore sway over Germany. Five czars had held over their enormous territory the precarious tenure of their iron power. Six kings had borne the painful cincture of the English crown."

Though rigidly speaking the date of our tale does not come down quite so low,—yet what stupendous changes had passed over the face of Europe, including the sad day which we commemorate in this chapter, during the single reign of Louis!

In England alone, over what a vast and varied period of history does this one glorious reign extend! Louis survived the rule of Charles I., Cromwell, Charles II., James II., and of his daughter Mary. Such was the monarch, now in the decline of his long bright day, who could still afford to breathe words of comfort and of promise into the ear of his royal dying brother. "I am come, sir," says he, turning to James, as he approached to his bed-side, "to acquaint you with a matter of great importance:" on which the attendants of both kings, including the Plowdens and Robert Strickland, began to withdraw.

“Let nobody withdraw,” exclaimed Louis, as he honoured Major Strickland with a smile of recognition. “I am come,” resumed the Grand Monarch, “to acquaint you that whenever it shall please God to call your majesty out of this world, I will take your family under my protection, and will recognise your son, the prince of Wales, as the heir of your three realms.”

This was, perhaps, the proudest hour of Louis's life. All present threw themselves at the feet of the powerful monarch. The scene was so moving, that Louis himself could not refrain from mingling his tears with those which were shed by the friends of James. James feebly extended his arms to embrace his royal friend, and strove to speak, but his voice failed him. The young prince threw himself at the feet of Louis, with expressions of gratitude. Louis raised, and tenderly embraced him, promising to be as a father to him.

As this scene was exciting too much emotion in the sick room, the queen, Louis, and the prince, passed into her Majesty's chamber. James sank into a sort of lethargic stupor, from which he was slowly aroused by the voice of the Curé, asking to learn his Majesty's last wishes.

“ I have just been begging of the King of France, as a last favour, that no funeral pomp might be used at my obsequies. I am anxious that the money should be saved, for the relief of my destitute followers.”

He then unclosed his eyes with a painful effort, and looking around, discerned Robert and Mary lingering among the last by his bed. He motioned them to his pillow. He looked affectionately on both, as they knelt within his reach. James extended a hand to each of them. Clammy, cold and quivering as it was, each gently kissed it, and on it dropped their kindred tears. The monarch feebly placed Mary's hand in Robert's ; then, looking towards the Curé, with great difficulty, faintly said, “ I owe you much for all your consolations of the Faith ; but there is still one more sacrament which I would ask at your hands :—the marriage of these two faithful loyalists and constant lovers.” His words to the Curé were almost the last the monarch ever spoke.

Overcome by their own feelings and all the melancholy surroundings of the death-bed, the happy, yet sorrowing betrothed ones sought the pure fresh air of Heaven and that retirement which they had for some time so greatly needed

and desired. Our hero and the woman for whom he had waited and hoped as long as Jacob of old for his bride, soon found themselves in a quiet parterre where Mary often walked. There they renewed those gentle vows which love delights to make. The sky that canopied them above that beautiful spot was of early autumn's purest blue, and all was peace. Their hearts were now most fully confiding in the destiny which Heaven itself ordained. Nothing occurred to awake their fears, or to disturb that delicious hour of sweet, sweet communion. All was silent, placid sunshine sleeping on the flower beds. They heard no sound but the insect world buzzing all around.

While deliberating how, most pleasantly, they would vary and lengthen their enchanting walk together, and looking in every direction on the garden landscape, their eyes fell upon the form of a man well dressed and of a military air. A young lady near him was gathering flowers. There was more of tenderness and less of dignity about her than her companion displayed.

"O'Brian! O'Brian!" exclaimed she, placing a bouquet of beautiful and fragrant flowers in his bosom.

"Faith it's yourself that's the elegant girl; my

jewel, mavourneen, macushla ! My Jane, I admire your choice."

"Of the flowers or of you?" asked the lively girl. There was no time for an answer when Strickland accosted the guardsman.

After the first greetings of this interesting party, whom accident had so fortunately thrown together, and the rapturous congratulations, necessary introductions, and mutual explanations, Major Strickland said, "We shall be delighted to see you at our wedding to-morrow."

"Any day but to-morrow, my dear fellow," was the reply.

"But why not to-morrow, Clare?" asked the other.

"Because," he pleasantly answered, "I shall be at our own wedding."

"Well then, my brave fellow," said Strickland, "as we have been comrades in war, so shall we be in love."

"We shall be married before the same altar—by the same priest—and at the same time; and upon my sacred word of honour, a happier company never came together than ourselves," said O'Brian.

"Shall we not be happy, very, very happy, Jane, to-morrow?"

Lady Jane blushed deeply; but her blush, like whatever dress she wore for the time that was present, made her appear to the greatest advantage. Such were the graces of her form and mien that whatever garb she assumed for the occasion became her best.

The two fair ladies fondly embraced and rejoiced together as none but happy ladies on the eve of their union with the men—the only men—they ever loved, can rejoice. Theirs was bliss, if bliss on earth there be. The end of their troubles ends our story.

The patient reader who has accompanied us so far will scarcely endure another word: if, however, he should still feel some little lingering interest for those who have occupied the chief place in this history of ours, we would offer them one more parting glimpse of our dear friends, ere the falling curtain shuts them from our view for ever.

No sooner had the delightful transport of the meeting in the parterre, which we have just described, subsided, than, to avoid some persons whose footsteps they heard approaching, our pleasant party turned into a walk which led back by a different way to the château, and as they did so they were suddenly startled by a

wailing howl, which forcibly reminded Strickland of the Banshee at Sullivan's, near Londonderry.

"That's the dismal 'coyne' of the Banshee, and by the same token it forebodes the king's death. God grant he may live over to-morrow," cried Clare.

"I never heard of a Banshee in any country but Ireland," said Strickland.

"But O'Brian the Brave," rattled Lady Jane, "carries his country with him, and its superstitions, which people his fertile imagination with false prophets."

"Hark!" cries Mary Plowden, "it is the baying of a staghound."

They all advanced in the direction of the cry, and beheld old Lion, who had become stupid and infirm with age. He noticed them not, but, as if unconscious of their presence, poured out his ceaseless moan nearly under the window of the royal chamber, as if aware of the impending death of the king on whom he could no longer fawn.

Before they could divert him from his melancholy dirge, or attract his attention, a ranger who had been ordered to dispatch the animal out of the way, was already advancing within shot

of him, as if prepared for the chase. The sound of the man's voice and the sight of the very arms which were to be the destruction of Lion, deceived him into the belief that he was required for the stag hunt. The instinct of his nature was aroused—his energy sprang into life. He awoke from the stupor of years. He demonstrated with the whole power of his reviving spirit, the joy which he felt in the sport of the field. He fawned on the man, who was now reluctant to shoot the fine old dog. But he was saved the task; for so violent had been the exertion and excitement of the noble Lion, that he fell down dead.

While the bridal party were talking over the vicissitudes of his life and his extraordinary fate, footsteps were again heard near them. The footsteps were doubtless those from which they had been retreating—the voices were by no means strange. In another moment they were overtaken by Lady Jane's father, accompanied by Lord O'Brian Clare, Colonel Plowden, also by Mr. Robert Strickland, the Queen's chamberlain, who looked very ill. His cheeks were hollow, and under his eyes were half circles of a livid hue. He was uncle to our hero of the same name. The noblemen and gentlemen had been

in search of their young relations amid the parterres, terraces, and labyrinths of the pleasure grounds. They at last had fallen in with them, and hailed them with delight, overwhelming them with good wishes and kindness.

The younger and the elder parties in company now returned to the palace, where, in a spacious and gorgeously furnished saloon, a numerous assembly of their friends received them with the most cordial expressions of satisfaction and joy.

The usual arrangements having been made for the weddings, the next day, according to the Royal recommendation, Robert and Mary were made one by a double tie—the union of minds and bodies.

The Honourable O'Brian and Lady Jane were married at the same time. Both happy parties kept the bridal feast on the same glad day.

So blessed and joyful beyond the lot of mortals, were the destinies of the two married couples, that, notwithstanding the well-known names which they bear, and the position which they occupy, we cannot but ascribe their existence to Fiction.

In the Region of Romance they were born, they lived and they died.

The design of the narrator, throughout, has been to portray the actors and scenes in the Drama of the Revolution of 1688, during which Great Britain lived the life of ages, crowded into a few months—just as the persons and events of the period displayed themselves.

Whenever the story seems to indicate sketches of real characters—unless, indeed, such personages be recognised by History—they are pure children of Imagination, clothed, it may be, and distinguished, at times, by the colouring of memory—unconscious memory, perhaps, in which linger those with whom the author has peopled his story, according to his converse with them, in the records of the dead, or in the living library of the world.

He claims no real “sitter” for his picture.

In a foreign land, amid the scenes which he describes, in silence and solitude, he held Communion with spirits unseen. They were the unreal companions of his sea-side walks and tranquil hours. They revived the recollections of earlier, and, *therefore*, brighter days. Not only what he recorded, but what found no utterance, went on, giving back deep echoes of the past, until one volume soon grew into a *second*, which unfolded itself into a *third*.

This bursting all bounds and control rebelled into a *fourth* volume.

The whole has been the most pleasing task of the author's life, and if, as a whole, it will but impart to the reader even a portion of the interest and recreation which this Historical Novel has afforded the writer, the end at which he originally aimed will be fully achieved. His highest aspirations will be satisfied.

A few words more and the story is told.

O'Brian Clare and his bride soon set out for Ireland, where eventually he succeeded to the title and estate of his father.

Robert and Mary on their way to the north of England, passed a few of the happiest days that ever fell to the lot of mortals since the exile of Adam and Eve.

Colonel and Mrs. Plowden forgot all their past griefs in the bliss of this long wished-for and delightful alliance. Mrs. Strickland of Strickland had scarcely become a mother before she succeeded to all the unentailed property of her uncle, the wealthy financier of James and the member for Bannow. To Major Strickland, the Queen's Chamberlain, who only survived the king a short time, bequeathed a valuable estate,

secured like Strickland's from the clutches of William, so that long and uninterrupted prosperity, and the highest and happiest of joys crowned the patient constant lovers' married life.

THE END.

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